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THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, February, 1958, Vol. 201, No. 2. Published monthly. Editorial, Circulation, and Advertising Offices, 8 Arlington St., Boston 16, Mass. Published at The Rumford Press, 10 Ferry St., Concord, N. H. 60 cents a copy, $7.50 a year. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage. Entered as second-class matter July 15, 1918, at the Post Office at Concord, N. H. under the Act of March 3, 1879. Printed in the U.S.A. by Rumford Press, Concord, N. H.
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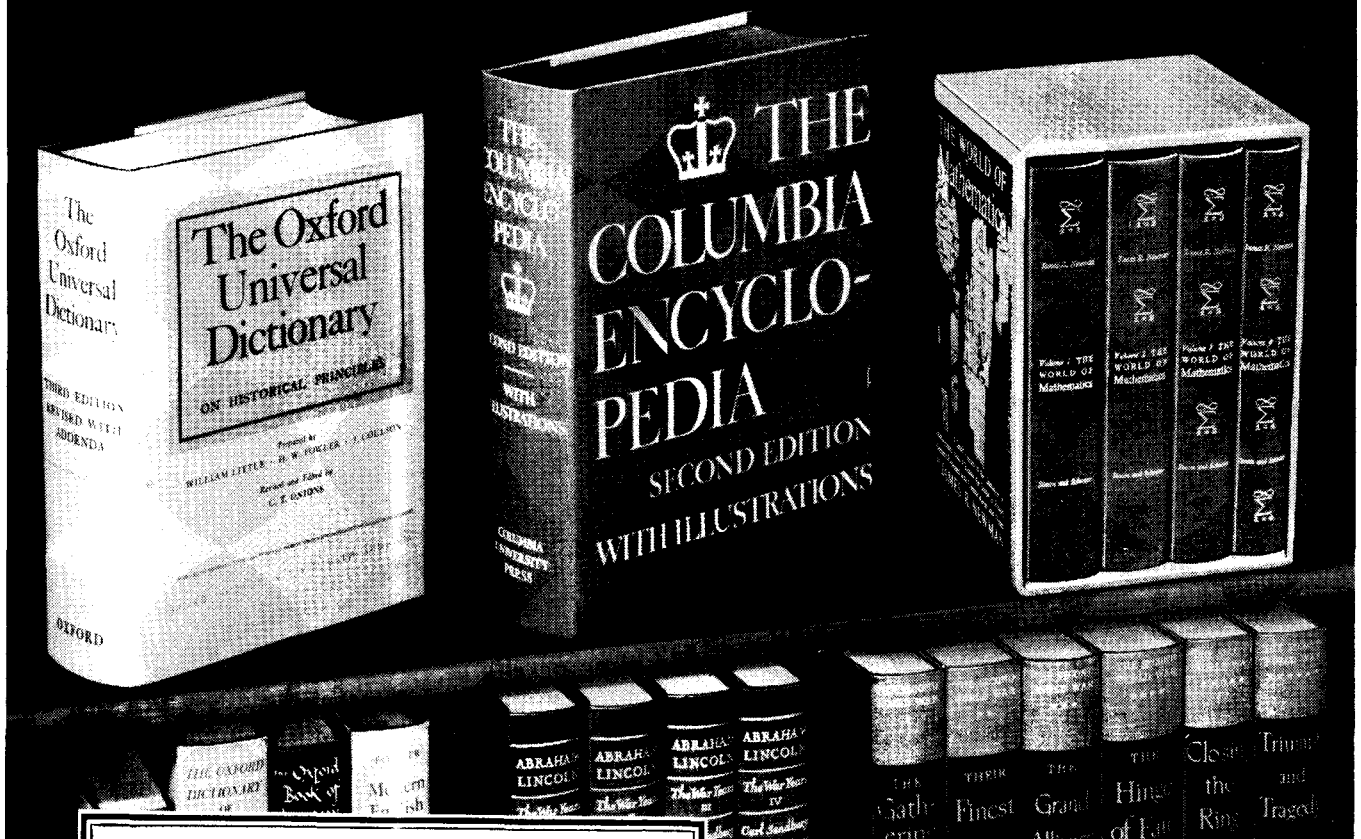

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The Atlantic Report on the World Today

WASHINGTON

It is not a happy moment when the neighbors are listening in on a family quarrel. Likewise, it is not a happy period when the rest of the world, free and Communist, hears American leaders and opinion makers all shouting at once, blaming each other for past mistakes and arguing over what must be done now to save the republic.

Yet in the perspective of history this sort of family argument is the essence of democracy, provided that out of the conflict comes a hard determination of what must and shall be done. This indeed will be the test of the first half of 1958 when the second session of the 85th Congress is meeting. The apparently aimless milling about may dismay both Americans and our foreign friends and allies. But they should look for the signs of an emerging program on which there is widespread agreement among the Republican Administration, the Democratic-controlled Congress, and the American people all across the land.

Nikita Khrushchev has been complaining that Western leaders have used the launching of the Soviet earth satellites to whip up a war frenzy. In Washington it has been widely said that Khrushchev's Sputniks may turn out to be the Kremlin's fatal error because they have so dramatically shown Americans that the United States has been too smug and complacent.

A knowledge of the facts is vital to a program of action, once complacency is stripped away. This means facts not only for the President and his handful of top advisers but for the Congress and the public on whose votes the senators and representatives depend. The battle to get the facts on record dominated the winter months in Washington. It centered on the work of the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee headed by the Democratic leader, Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, and on the Gaither Report compiled for the President and the National Security Council.

Johnson's committee has put on record many of the unpleasant facts long heard in bits and pieces in Washington. Johnson has found the ideal political situation: the national interest coincides with the political interest of his own party. And in the present case there is a bonus for the Democrats — an issue, national security, on which the party could unite at a time when it was threatened by the divisive issue of race relations.

Johnson's task has been to bring the defense problem into focus, to find modes of action on which his party could agree. But Congress rarely is able to *make* foreign policy in a positive sense; it is the President's job to formulate and to enunciate policy and, when necessary, to battle for its enactment by the Congress.

The Gaither Report

The Gaither Committee was composed of a group of outstanding men in the business, scientific, and educational worlds, assisted by many of the ablest technical brains in and out of government. The committee went to work last summer when Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson was slashing Pentagon expenditures to live within the President's $38-billion defense budget and when the new Treasury Secretary, Robert Anderson, was hopefully considering how big a tax cut the Administration would be able to propose for the year 1958.

But the Washington mood was in the process of reversal by the time the Gaither Committee laid its recommendations before the President four days after the second Soviet Sputnik. The second of Eisenhower's two radio-TV talks prior to his

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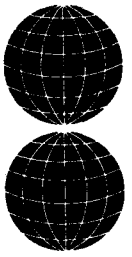

mild stroke reflected some of the concern the report created in his mind.

Publication of many of the major points in the Gaither Report by the Washington *Post* on the day Eisenhower returned home from the Paris Conference of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization heightened the sense of uneasiness among members of Congress who were soon to reassemble, even though the report was poohpoohed by some officials, especially in the Pentagon, who saw in it a challenge to their vast domains. For the Gaither Committee in looking forward through 1970 had called for not only massively higher defense spending and increased foreign aid, but also for a sweeping reorganization of the Pentagon's command structure and of the roles and missions of the armed services, and for a multi-billion-dollar civil defense shelter program.

No Administration in power likes to concede that it has failed to do something that it should have done, least of all in the realm of national defense. This Administration, having come to power on a pledge to put things right and end the seemingly endless crises which marked the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations, seemed to consider it would be a disgrace to admit that a new crisis was upon us.

But as the facts of American military decline came to light in one way or another and as the illusions of a Soviet collapse were swept away, the President's mood changed. In November he was saying that while he would like to do the many and costly things called for by the Gaither Committee he did not believe that the American people would stand for the cost. But when Congress convened again he was so flooded with calls for leadership that he was willing to ask more of the public than he had ever before asked.

The NATO meeting

The Paris NATO meeting seemed to have a salutary effect on Eisenhower. By nature an optimist and a believer in conciliation, the President has always been determined to find ways and means of settling the great issues which divide the world. But because he has leaned strongly on his Secretary of State, the image of America has often been that of a recalcitrant John Foster Dulles.

In the period prior to the Sputniks, Dulles was publicly enunciating his doctrine that there could be no "meeting of minds" between the Free World and the Communist orbit. To prove his point he reiterated the charge that Bulganin and Khrushchev had solemnly agreed at the 1955 Summit Conference in Geneva to the reunification of Germany on the basis of free elections. He introduced this thesis into Eisenhower's speech at the NATO conference table and even into the NATO communiqué itself.

In fact Dulles knows, as does every diplomat and reporter who was at Geneva, that the Soviets made no such agreement, that the phrase he so fondly quoted was from the directive of the heads of government to their foreign ministers, and that this was a semantic compromise constructed in large part by himself to paper over the fundamental disagreement on Germany and European security.

The necessity to negotiate

At Paris the other NATO nations let Dulles have his way with semantics while they concentrated on what was to them the larger theme: there must be another effort to negotiate with Moscow.

The compromise, to go ahead with the missile arming of Western Europe while trying to negotiate, was not what Dulles had intended when he left Washington. But it was fully in keeping with the Eisenhower approach. And both the American military weakness, with the suddenly realized American dependence on Europe for intermediate-missile bases, and the European political pressures for another try at negotiation made the outcome inevitable.

The fact that no American IRBMs are now available for placement in Europe and that none will be available in meaningful quantity for another year or so means inevitably a period of diplomatic haggling between East and West over the terms of a new conference. Dulles sought at Paris to limit the proposed talks to disarmament but the indications soon were that any East-West talks were likely to cover a much broader field, including the Soviet proposal (put forward through the nervous Poles) for a "nuclear free zone" and the recurrent talk of a mutual troop withdrawal and a "neutralized" Germany once the country becomes unified.

Reports from Europe have indicated that the proposals put forward just before the Paris Conference by George Kennan, now a sort of youthful elder statesman of the Dulles opposition, have had wide effect. Dulles has looked upon such ideas with suspicion but some of his subordinates, including men on whom he depends, are willing

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Report on Washington

to say privately that the Kennan approach may eventually turn out to be the correct one. Many in Washington who disagree with the Kennan proposals, especially with his idea that a unified Germany can be left suspended between East and West, concede that his words have been salutary because they have made people think and realize that the present frozen situation cannot continue indefinitely.

Can we bargain with the Kremlin?

The Soviet Sputnik-missile achievements, it has been widely believed in Washington, have so inflated the self-confidence of the Russians that they will be more difficult than ever to deal with. But another reading in some high Administration circles is that today's rough military equality — in the negative sense of the mutual deterrence terror — makes negotiation possible for the first time, provided the United States is willing to meet the Soviet Union as an equal. Soviet tactics at the United Nations over the nature of the Disarmament Commission and its subcommittee, heretofore composed of four Western nations and the Russians, testify to the demand for equality at the conference table.

But how will the bargaining be done? And what will it encompass? Khrushchev told the Supreme Soviet after the NATO Conference that he wanted a new Summit Conference "that will solve all problems that trouble humanity, including disarmament." The professional diplomats have a built-in suspicion of meetings of heads of governments, which always leave unravelled edges for them to deal with.

The President, with the Geneva Summit experience behind him, is certainly wary of another go-around with Bulganin and Khrushchev. His publicly stated concept of such a conference before it took place in 1955 was that the top men should attend merely to ratify what had been patiently worked out by the foreign ministers and through normal diplomatic exchanges. In 1955, Eisenhower consented to go to Geneva before there were any such agreements. And the record shows that not only were no hard agreements forthcoming at the subsequent Foreign Ministers Conference that fall but that the Soviets skillfully exploited the so-called "spirit of Geneva" while the United States did little or nothing, in part because of the President's heart attack that year.

The politics of disarmament

The central agenda point of any new East-West talks is likely to be called "disarmament" even though both sides know it will not be so limited. The incredibly rapid pace of scientific development in the arms field has made it almost impossible for the political leaders to know how to deal with arms control. Many besides Kennan are convinced that to talk of arms control is to put the cart before the horse. It is exceedingly difficult to argue against this point of view when scientists of such repute as Edward Teller argue that arms control is impossible in a fast-moving period of weapons technology.

It is for this reason that there is a growing body of opinion in the Capital which states that the re-examination of the American disarmament proposals must include political issues, that the potential seeing eyes of the Sputniks have altered the fundamental premise on which the 1955 "open skies" proposal was based, that the missile age now upon us requires easing of political tensions lest some individual or some military crew, as Khrushchev has said, take things into his or its own hand and strike the first blow which would quickly lead to Armageddon.

The sum of all these thoughts in Washington would seem to come down to this: the government, both the executive and the legislative, has at last broken out of the cocoon of complacency and this is all to the good. But as it surveys the new world about it the government, both executive and legislative, is uncertain. It knows that the first priority is to regroup the nation's military power lest without prompt remedial action America should become the second-class nation foreseen by the Gaither Committee.

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★ ★ ★

REFERENCES: "Competition and Trading Stamps in Retailing." Dr. Eugene R. Beem, School of Business Administration, University of California.

"Trading Stamp Practice and Pricing Policy." Dr. Albert Haring and Dr. Wallace O. Yoder, Marketing Department, School of Business, Indiana University.

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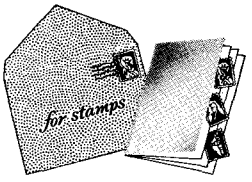

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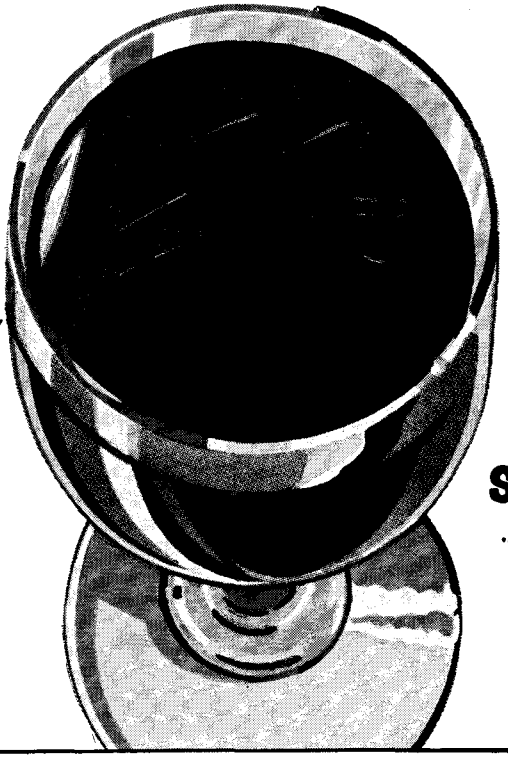

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Report on Washington

There is not yet sufficient appreciation in Washington of the Soviet tactics. The probability is less of a nuclear Pearl Harbor than of economic-political-subversive assaults on the areas of Western weakness in the Middle East and South Asia, and this calls for more economic aid to such nations as India regardless of Nehru's infuriating pronouncements.

There is a general agreement that the arms race alone is no answer to mankind's ills, that somehow the United States and the Soviet Union must learn to live together both on this planet and in outer space.

Mood of the Capital

Since this is a congressional election year, the Congress cannot escape the political consequences of all the momentous issues which face it. The feeling in Washington as the Congress reconvened was that the issues which center on national defense would be primary.

Nonetheless, the politicians are particularly sensitive to economic issues and the signs continue to show a downturn in the economy. As the Gaither Committee realized, an increase in defense spending may turn out to be a fortuitous coincidence in solving both the defense problem and the economic problem. But the time lag is likely to be considerable and more unpleasant statistics are likely to emerge before the downturn is reversed. The farm problem continues but this, too, cannot be divorced from the defense issue.

The defense crisis is likely to overshadow the desegregation issue. The politicians of both parties for the most part are happy to see that issue laid aside for a while and they were pleased to hear that the new Attorney General, William P. Rogers, was proposing no new legislation for this session. The newly established Civil Rights Commission will serve both parties as the excuse for leaving bad enough alone.

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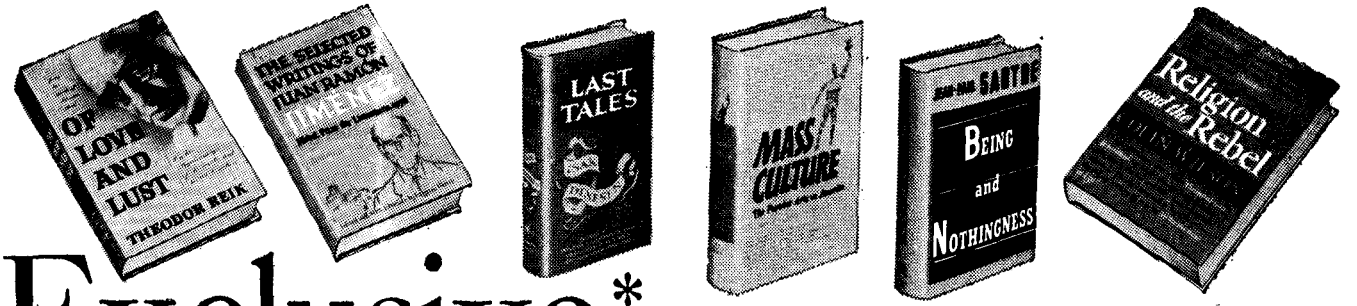

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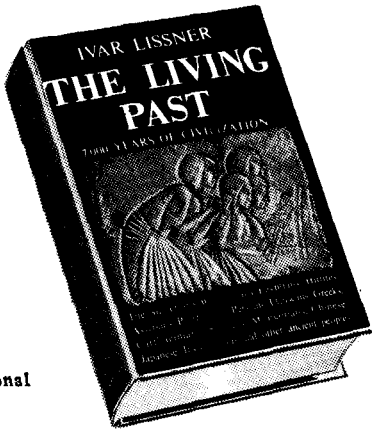

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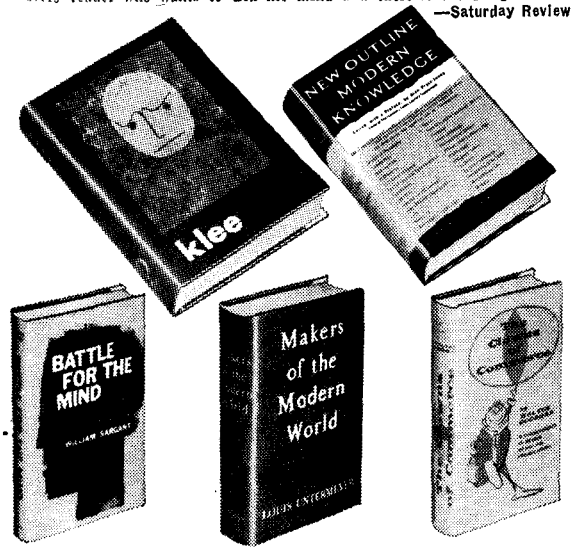

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The Atlantic Report FINLAND

The fortieth anniversary of independence, celebrated last December 6, found Finland in a mood of national soul-searching. The cost-of-living index had risen 25 per cent in less than two years. Export markets were increasingly competitive and uncertain. Unemployment, already at the 50,000 mark in late November, threatened to reach the highest figure since the 1930s.

It was too early to know whether the drastic financial surgery of September, when the Finnmark was devalued by 28 per cent, would stimulate the export industry fast enough to improve the employment situation. It might be merely the prelude to still higher prices and a further round of inflationary wage increases. Meanwhile, the longest political crisis in the nation's history ended just in time for the country to have a government by Independence Day.

Finland, with a population of 4.4 million — smaller than that of Massachusetts — lies under the eye of its watchful Eastern neighbor. If the Finns today, in spite of their neighbor and their internal difficulties, seem remarkably free of panic, it is because they have been through worse times.

Long before Finland broke away from Russia in 1917, it was torn by a growing bitterness between the have's and the have-not's — an antagonism which erupted into the savage Civil War of 1918 between the Reds and the Whites. The social scars of that war, which was won by the Whites under Mannerheim, are still clearly visible. To a large extent the voting pattern reflects the alignment of the old battlefields. The intellectuals, remembering 1918, lean heavily toward conservatism. Amateur sports remain divided into two national organizations, and the considerable political skill of President Kekkonen has not been able to effect a merger.

Finland more than survived the Civil War. Democracy and the traditional freedoms were established, seemingly on a firm basis. At the very end of the 1920s, however, the latent class antipathies, rubbed raw by the Depression, exploded into violence. The Lapua Movement sprang up, McCarthyite in mentality and Ku Klux in methods. For two years it pressured the government into antiliberal measures. Legislation was passed virtually prohibiting strikes and hamstringing the labor unions. And the Communist Party was driven underground.

The Lapua Movement eventually overplayed its hand; the democratic tradition reasserted itself and a remarkably united nation faced the challenge of the Soviet giant in the Winter War of 1939–1940. During the Continuation War of 1941–1944, Finland discovered itself effectively if unofficially allied with Germany, though from the Finnish viewpoint this was coincidence rather than ideological coöperation. When Finland saw the hopelessness of the military situation in 1944, it negotiated an armistice with the Soviet Union and agreed to disarm the 200,000 picked German troops in the north. The latter resisted, and in their retreat during the Lapland War carried out a scorched-earth policy of vindictive thoroughness.

Three separate wars in the course of World War II, more than eighty thousand lives lost, war reparations set at $300 million to be paid in kind, mostly at 1938 prices — this was part of the cost to Finland. In addition, it ceded to the Soviet Union more than a tenth of its territory, including the fourth largest city, Viipuri. Nearly half a million displaced persons poured westward and had to be given a new start in life. But Finland kept its independence and its democracy.

Economic miracle

Once more Finland produced a miracle, an economic one. Payment of reparations, which the Soviet Union had meanwhile reduced by one fourth, was finished in 1952. The miracle was aided by foreign loans and good trade conditions. Reparations had one desirable by-product: the country took a long stride toward industrialization, particularly in engineering and shipbuilding. At the same time, the refugees were resettled, mostly on small farms especially created for them. The earlier efforts toward social welfare were expanded.

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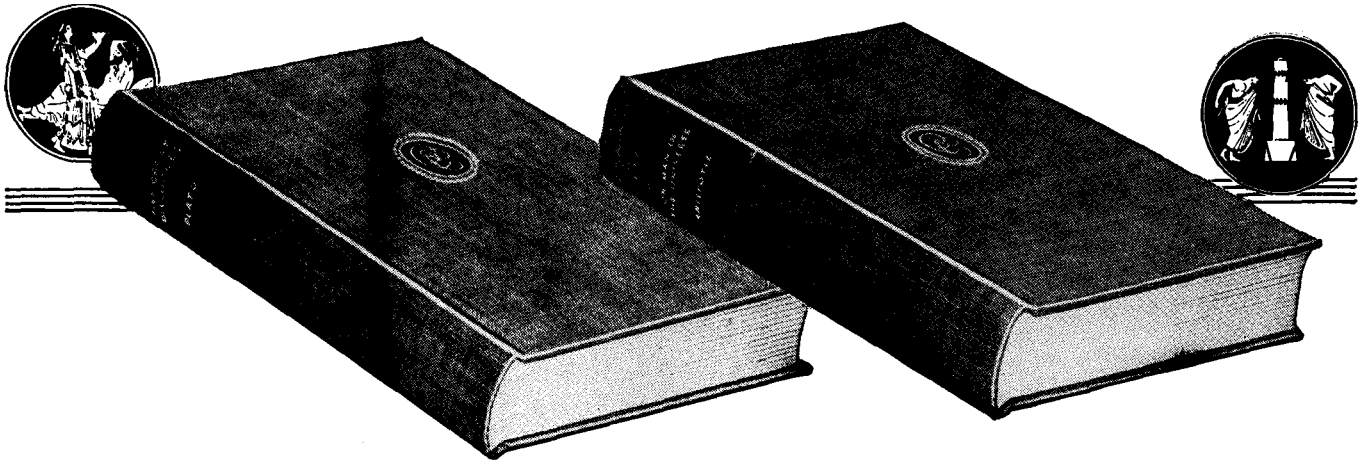

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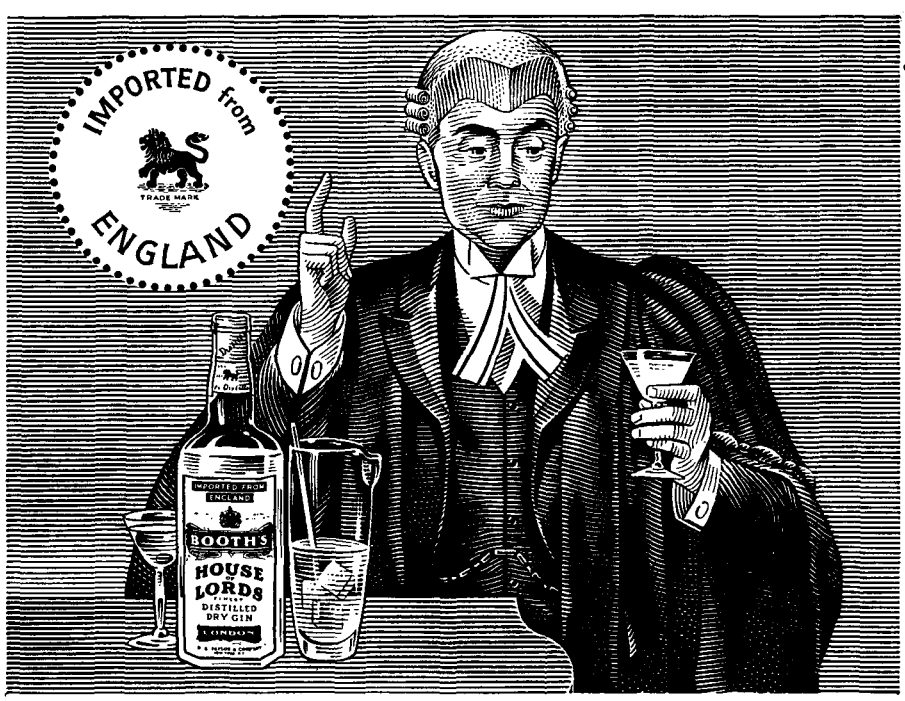

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Report on Finland

In foreign policy, the "Paasikivi line," named for the president from 1946 to 1956, called for friendship and neutrality toward all nations, and especial care to give the distrustful Soviets no pretext for suspicion. After reparations were paid, the country moved rapidly toward economic recovery. It is only in the past couple of years that the economic warning signals have been flying conspicuously.

Like the other Scandinavian countries, Finland has a mixed economy. The railroads are publicly owned and the government controls almost a third of the timber, but for the most part business is divided between private enterprise and the coöperatives. The latter enjoy a flourishing existence. More than one third of the retail trade passes at some point through the hands of one or other of the two largest coöperative organizations. In the marketing of agricultural products, the coöperative movement is even stronger.

Finland's mounting economic troubles are variously explained. The wartime losses and the drain of reparations are part of the background. Another factor frequently cited is the attempt to extend social services too fast.

More basic to Finland's present condition is the familiar problem of farm subsidies, designed to keep the small farmers going. The average Finnish farm contains only 22 acres of arable land, and many of the farmers must do part-time work in forestry or industry. As a pressure group, the farmers are well organized, and in recent years they have been able to assert their claims more effectively than the factory workers.

Fighting inflation

Much of the present crisis dates from the beginning of 1956, when price controls were prematurely loosened. The prices of food in particular went skyrocketing. This led

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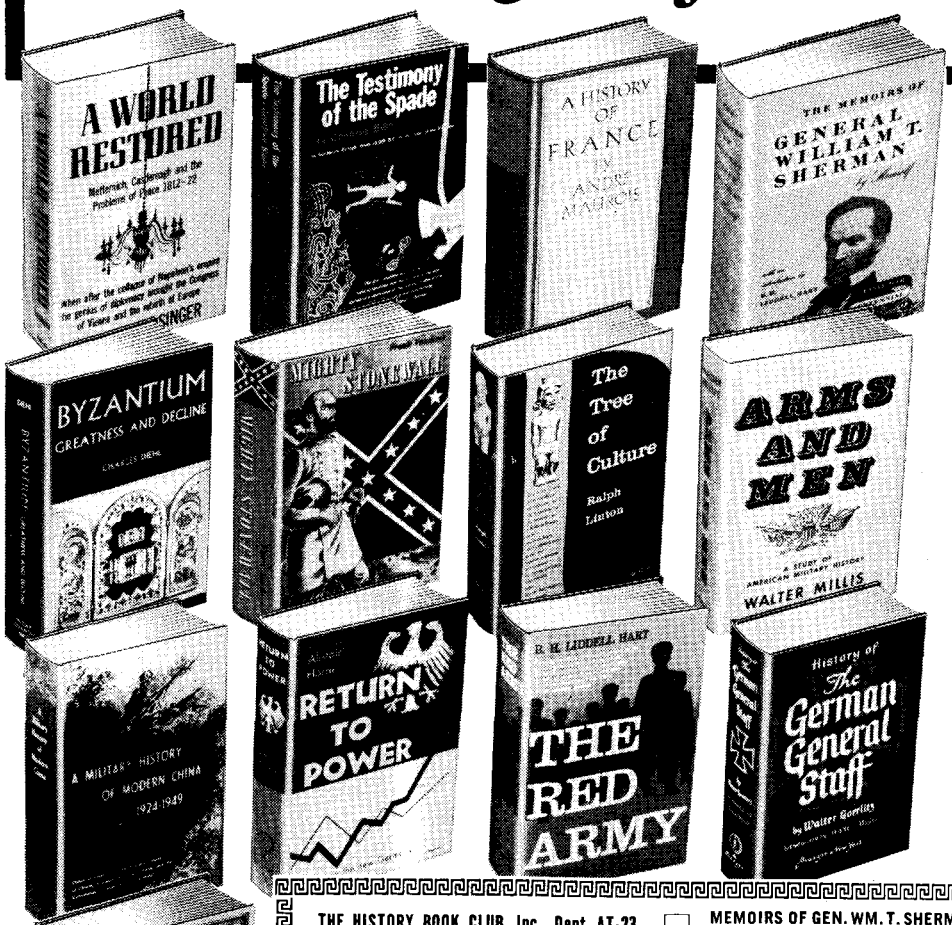

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Report on Finland

to a general strike a few months later, which was settled by a larger wage increase than was compatible with stable money. The galloping inflation continued, so that the wage gains were brief-lived. The average worker can buy less today than before the general strike.

The Bank of Finland has pursued an unyielding tight-money, deflationary policy which may eventually bring about stability but has so far contributed to a drop in purchasing power, to business stagnation, and to increased unemployment. The latter, fraught with dangerous social and political possibilities, requires heavy national and local expenditures for work relief.

In part, Finland's troubles simply reflect the conditions of world trade. Most of the nation's economic eggs are in one basket. Nearly 80 per cent of the exports are directly or indirectly from the "green gold" of the superb forests: lumber, plywood, prefabricated houses, paper, cellulose. The recent slight decline in world prices for lumber and plywood has been keenly felt in Finland. The market is becoming sharply competitive, and Canada and Sweden are cutting in on Finland's traditional markets.

All these troubles are of a creeping kind, and the average citizen was not fully conscious of them until the spring of 1957, when the government ran short of ready money and had to postpone certain salary payments and the quarterly installment of children's allowances.

Since the September devaluation, the government has moved toward a gradual relaxation of import controls, in the hope of restoring a freer economy. From a long-range viewpoint, the way out will probably also require a better balance between the interests of the workers and the farmers. Certainly, greater productivity in export products and lower production costs are essential, so that Finland can regain its position on the world market.

These goals run into formidable obstacles. There is a 20 per cent purchase tax on industrial machinery, which hardly encourages modernization or expansion of equipment. The farmers are not in a mood for sacrifices. The industrial workers, who earn about $130 a month before taxes (plus allowances for their children), will hardly welcome a further temporary lowering of their living standard. Nor is it certain that additional devaluation will help the economy. Real purchasing power is already low, and another cut might merely mean greater unemployment. It should be added that the labor unions, though caught in the cost-of-living squeeze, have shown remarkable restraint and statesmanship. Most of the recent collective bargaining contracts contain an escalator clause which calls for only two-thirds compensation if the cost of living keeps inching up.

Politics as usual

All economic problems are compounded by politics. In times of unmistakable crisis, the wrangling parties would probably put country above politics, as they did during the war, but the present dilemma so far lacks sufficient dramatic urgency to suspend politics as usual. After a minority government, headed by the Agrarian leader V. J. Sukselainen, was ousted on October 18, efforts were made to patch together almost every conceivable coalition, but without success.

Finally, after six weeks without a government, President Kekkonen resorted to the rare expedient of asking Rainer von Fieandt, director general of the Bank of Finland, to create a nonpartisan "government of experts." An impressive cabinet of specialists is now functioning.

Certainly Prime Minister von Fieandt is tough-minded. During the "cash crisis" of last spring, he refused to bail the government out. As head of the Bank of Finland he pushed so stringent a tight-money policy that interest on loans ranges from 8 to over 15 per cent.

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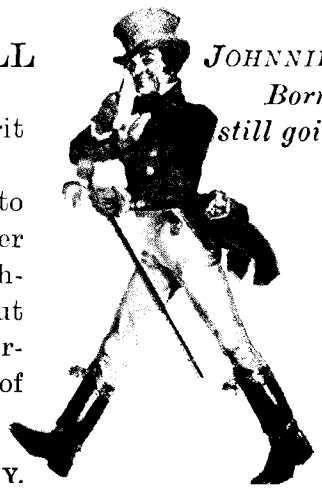

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...ended Scotch ... whisky...86.8 Proof. Imported by Canada Dry Ginger Ale, Inc., New York, N. Y.

Tribute to the man who wasn't there—a poignant moment

PABLO CASALS was ill. His place in center-stage was empty. And somehow you couldn't forget it.

The festival ended the way that it should. The final performance was given by the absent Casals. It was his recording of an old Catalan ballad—*the Song of the Birds*. The ovation was thunderous.

Casals has said, "Each day I am reborn. Each day I must begin again." Such is the simple courage that

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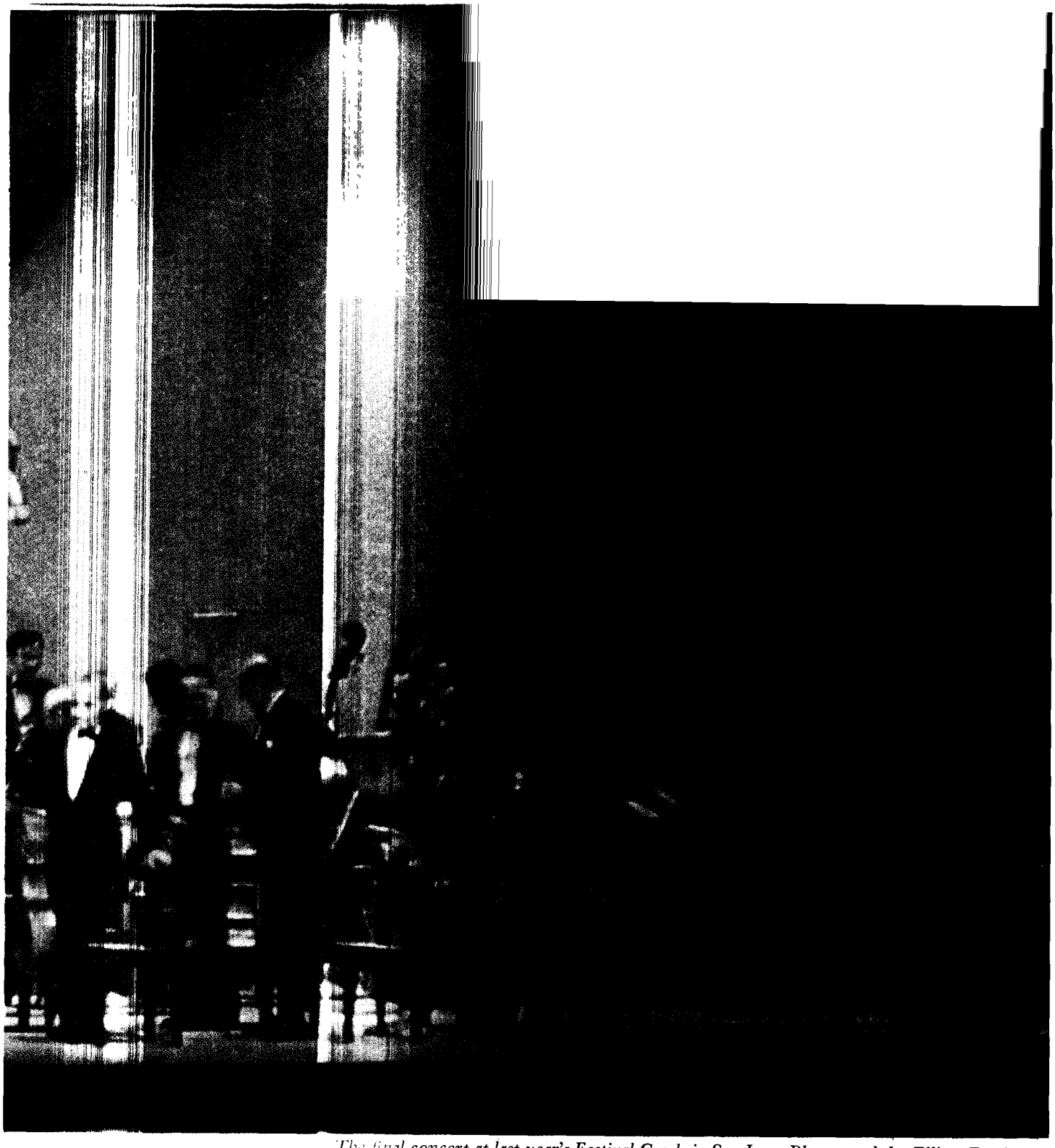

The final concert at last year's Festival Casals in San Juan. Photograph by Elliott Erwitt.

at last ear's Festival Casals in Puerto Rico

as restored Master to his music. C ce again he is ready to t s place among a distin uished group of musicians the *second* Festival Ca ls in San Juan.

This 19 val will run from Ap il 22 through May 8. The ogram will feature wo s by Mozart, Beethoven Brahms. Principal p formers will include Vic a de los Angeles, Mie zyslaw Horszowski, Eu ne Istomin, Jesús M ía Sanromá, Alexander Schneider, Rudolf Serkin, Isaac Stern, Walter Trampler—and the Budapest String Quartet.

Who can doubt that this year's festival will be even more brilliant than the last?

The great man himself will be there.

For details, write Festival Casals, P. O. Box 2672, San Juan, Puerto Rico, or to 666 Fifth Avenue, New York. Announcement by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York 19.

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Fabulous drinks made with John Jameson

IRISH COFFEE

People who have discovered the delight of Irish Coffee often ask whether that is the only way to enjoy John Jameson.

By no means! John Jameson makes a marvelous Manhattan, a delightful Old Fashioned, and a zestful tall drink with soda or water. Perhaps most fabulous of all and becoming quite a conversation piece is the very sprightly drink called the "Leprechaun."

LEPRECHAUN RECIPE: Over ice cubes in an old-fashioned glass, pour one jigger of John Jameson. Fill with tonic water. Add lemon peel; lemon juice if desired.

Both the Leprechaun and Irish Coffee owe their magic to what scientists call synergistic action, which means that the cooperative action of John Jameson and the other ingredients is infinitely more delightful than any of them taken independently.

Probably one reason for this synergistic action is that John Jameson is *all* pot still whiskey—every drop matured 7 years in oak casks. And that kind of pot still whiskey is mighty hard to find these days.

If you have John Jameson on hand, try a Leprechaun without delay. If not, rush out and buy a bottle.

How to make IRISH COFFEE

Into a pre-warmed stemmed 7-ounce goblet or a coffee cup, put jigger of John Jameson Irish Whiskey and 1 to 2 teaspoons of sugar. Fill to within ½ inch of top with *strong* black coffee. Instant coffee may be used if desired. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Top to brim with *chilled* whipped cream, so that cream floats on top. Do not stir after adding cream. The true delight of Irish Coffee is obtained by drinking it *through* the cream.

P. S. A simple way to enjoy the synergistic action of coffee and John Jameson is to add 1 jigger of John Jameson Irish Whiskey to coffee as you usually drink it.

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new premier vigorously sponsored — "index bank accounts." These involve an escalator clause, so that when the cost-of-living index goes up, the depositor receives either 50 or 100 per cent compensation, depending on his type of account. Naturally, interest rates on loans have to be adjusted upward to make allowance for this factor.

The unanswered question is whether a sturdy defense of the Finnmark is the all-sufficient answer to Finland's problems. Finland's perils are not merely fiscal. Excessive unemployment could provoke serious disorders.

Forty years of achievement

Finland's present troubles must be set against its forty years of solid achievement. For a country deeply divided by social and economic antagonisms, it has traveled very far toward inner unity. Partly this is due to the land reforms, which almost banished the tenant farmer from the Finnish countryside. Many small farmers may still be basically proletarian in their outlook, but they are certainly a less explosive force on their own land than they would be if they tilled the soil of a landlord.

The displaced persons have been so successfully integrated that they have no special political party to represent their grievances and interests. Since World War II, the labor unions have made good progress. A hopeful start toward a social welfare system has given the industrial workers a greater stake in society. And in general, Finland has become a country with fewer extremes of wealth than most.

The momentary drifting which one senses in Finland undoubtedly reflects a national mood of letdown. The country rose to heroic heights in the last war, and its time of reparations brought out the same stern virtues. But there is today little theater for obviously heroic deeds.

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The Atlantic Report SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY

THE 1958 automobiles have come in on a flood tide of million-dollar advertising campaigns, but one hand-built model launched without fanfare may prove more significant in the long run than all of Detroit's road chariots. The Cornell-Liberty safety car has a unique distinction: in theory at least, you could crash it at 50 mph and walk away unharmed.

The only one of its kind, the new auto is sponsored by the Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, which has a natural interest in cutting down auto fatalities. The builder, Cornell Aeronautical Laboratory, designed it after long studies of how to minimize crash casualties in fast-moving vehicles on the road and in the air.

Unlike more sales-minded designers, the lab's engineers approached their new car on the prosaic level of a package that must deliver its human contents unharmed despite rough handling. Logically, they based their design on four packaging principles:

Use a strong shipping case. The body of the safety car is strengthened to withstand the impact of a crash without collapsing on the passengers. Front and rear "roll-over bars" shield the roof so the car could turn over completely without major damage. Extra bumpers protect the sides while front and rear bumpers wrap around and are designed to turn blows aside. Plastic foam between bumpers and car frame helps absorb crash shock.

Fasten the lid of the package tightly. The doors of the safety car are closed with three bolt bars so they not only stay shut in a crash but add structural strength to the body. To help the passengers get in and out easily, the doors hinge in the middle and fold open like those of a telephone booth.

Pack the contents tightly. Cornell engineers have demonstrated what can be done in this direction by designing an egg box that can be hurled against a wall without cracking a shell. In the car, the passengers are held equally firmly in place in bucket seats that provide maximum support. In the three front seats, a padded panel pulls out like a desk or tray from under the dashboard across the rider's lap and keeps him from being thrown forward.

The driver's lap panel contains all the controls. Because the driver has the greatest exposure to accidents, he has been moved front and center to a position slightly ahead of and above the flanking seats, giving him maximum vision and protection. In the rear, only the two outside passengers face forward; the middle passenger sits back to back with the driver. All are held in place by quick-release safety belts that automatically roll up out of the way when not in use. Nylon head supports minimize dangerous whiplash when a car is struck from behind.

Not only the passengers but their possessions are tightly packed in the safety car. An extra-strong wall between trunk and rear seats keeps heavy packages from smashing through, while the rear package shelf is dropped below the seat backs to keep objects from flying forward.

Remove hard objects from the packing. The car interior has been stripped of knobs, mirrors, and all other sharp protruding objects. Even the steering wheel and supporting shaft — a potential menace when a driver is thrown forward — have been eliminated. The driver steers by two handles, rather like the grips on a rowing machine, which he pulls or pushes to turn the car.

The wrap-around windshield has been carefully designed to avoid distortion at the corners. Air intakes are above the windshield to minimize the threat of carbon monoxide. The vents are shaped to maintain a slight positive pressure in the passenger compartment, preventing dangerous fumes from being drawn in from the engine or exhaust.

Road safety through signals

Some auto industry experts approach safety problems along different lines. Dr. Lawrence R. Hafstad, GM's vice president in charge of

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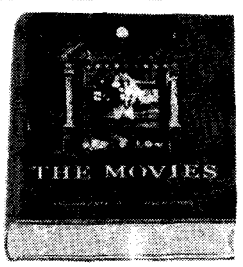

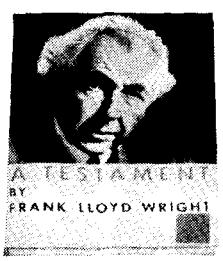

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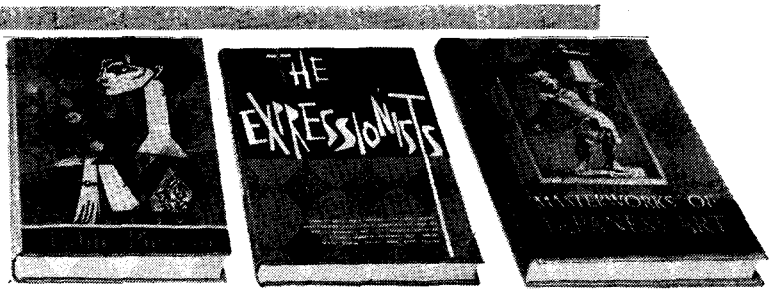

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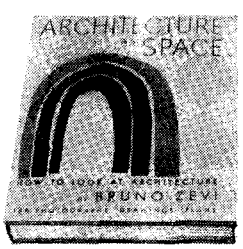

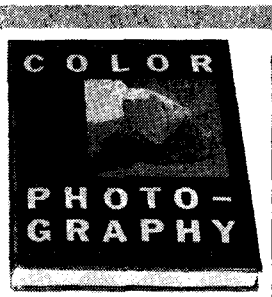

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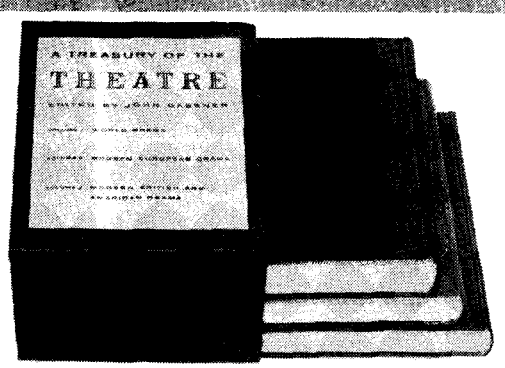

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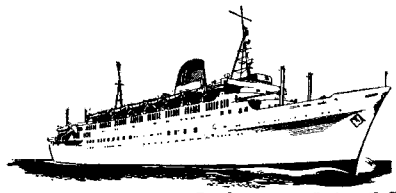

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research staff, has declared, "I am convinced that more progress can be made in traffic safety by emphasizing the relations between the driver, the signalling system, and the road, than by undue emphasis on a crash-proof car — which could lead us to a progressive stalemate analogous to the classic conflict between projectile and armor plate." Dr. Hafstad thinks that it is impossible to get the public to support an accident reduction program if it involves any effort or inconvenience.

It sometimes takes nine impractical ideas to produce one good one. As a sample, Dr. Hafstad suggests a monitoring system, connected to radar stations along the roadside, that would tell the driver — possibly by playing "Nearer My God to Thee" — when he is exceeding the speed limit. Another suggestion is a speed-recording system on every car. After a crash, the device would bear witness as to whether the driver had handled his car recklessly.

Dr. Hafstad is eager for better instrumentation. There are eight things, he said, that he would like to be told while he is driving, continuously and without taking his eyes from the road: 1) that he is running at a safe speed for that particular section of highway under specific road conditions of snow, ice, and so forth, 2) that he is within the legal speed limit, 3) that he has at least enough gas to reach the next gas station, 4) whether cars are approaching from the rear, right-rear, or left-rear, 5) whether he can safely pass a car ahead in the face of oncoming traffic, 6) whether, if he does pass a closely bunched group of cars just in front, he would find open road ahead, 7) whether he has fallen or is falling asleep, 8) how often this section of road is patrolled to provide aid in case of breakdown.

"With my eyes on the road where they belong, my instruments tell me none of these things," Dr. Hafstad declares. "Regarding some I can get partial information with furtive stolen glances. Regarding most, I can get no information at all."

Early cancer detection

The deadliness of cancer lies not merely in its ferocity but in its habit of lodging in obscure parts of the body and lurking undiscovered until it is incurable. With present methods of treatment, early diagnosis is all-important: the cure rate for skin cancers that are quickly discovered is nine times that of internal types. Medical researchers are working hard to find the basic causes of cancer that will point the way to elimination of the disease, but until they succeed, the best hope for reducing the quarter-million U.S. deaths from cancer each year is to find ways to detect cancers at the earliest possible moment.

The exfoliation diagnosis method, developed by world-famed Dr. George N. Papanicolaou, has done much to slash the mortality rate of cervical cancer. It is based on the fact that all cells of the body — cancerous or not — are constantly dying off and being replaced by new ones. Live cancer cells not only multiply more rapidly than normal cells, but they die and drop off more readily too, and when seen through a microscope they are strikingly different in appearance.

The Papanicolaou technique consists of obtaining dead cells from body fluids, staining and fixing them in specially developed ways, and examining them through a microscope. A doctor or technician trained in the method must be familiar with the characteristics of normal cells of the organ under study as well as with abnormalities and eccentricities of various kinds. When a skilled cytologist sees large cells with greatly enlarged, deeply stained nuclei, clustered in peculiar formations, he is reasonably sure he has found a case of cancer.

The body fluids containing cast-off cells from cervical tissue are readily accessible: samples can be easily obtained in a doctor's office without discomfort. Now a variety of ways is being found to gather sloughed-off cells from less accessible organs. Stomach cells are obtained by inflating a balloon inside the digestive

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1. **You can't deduct from your income tax the market value of cast-off clothing given to the Salvation Army.**
2. **On $600 a month income you can safely spend $92 on mortgage payments.**
3. **Buying stocks is one of the best ways to make sure your dollars today are worth as much in 25 years.**
4. **Term insurance gives a growing family all the protection it needs.**
5. **Part-time work does not qualify a person for social security.**
6. **A typical middle-income family of 4 should expect to pay $30 to $35 a week for food.**
7. **Figures show that 70% of workers over 45 perform as well or better than younger workers.**
8. **It always costs less to finance a new car through a dealer.**
9. **Investing a fixed sum at regular intervals is the best way to buy stocks.**
10. **The biggest retail lines in 1980 will be appliances and recreational equipment.**

Answers: 1. *False* 2. *True* 3. *True* 4. *False* 5. *False* 6. *True* 7. *True* 8. *False* 9. *True* 10. *True*

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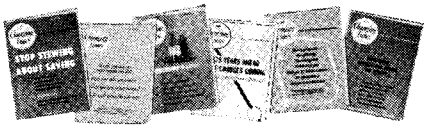

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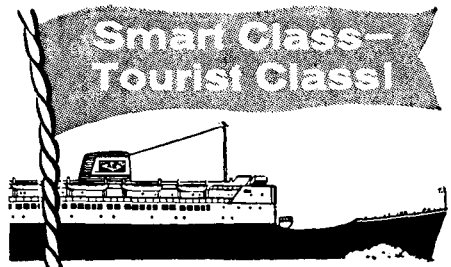

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tract so that it rubs cells off the stomach lining. In another method, developed at the University of Washington and the University of Michigan, the patient drinks a solution containing the enzyme chymotrypsin. This enzyme dissolves the mucus that lines the stomach, causing cells to drop off. The liquid is then drawn off by suction and examined. In one study, this method revealed nineteen out of twenty stomach cancers — expertly used, it never gives a false positive report.

Lung cancer cells can be found in sputum coughed up by patients, according to doctors at Albany Medical College. Similar research on lung cancer is being done at the University of California, where 88 per cent of the cancers later found to exist were first diagnosed correctly by cell studies. Lung cancer is one of the most deadly because it rarely shows itself until too late.

These are only some of the areas investigators are exploring. Centrifugation of fresh urine produces bladder cells for the microscope. Prostatic secretions may be obtained by massage. Researchers have found tumors in the pancreas — extremely hard to detect — by stimulating the pancreas intravenously with a chemical that causes the gland to shed cells into the duodenum, whence they can be washed out with a saline solution. University of Washington scientists are working on techniques for obtaining exfoliated cells from other hard to reach places such as the small intestine, liver, and gall bladder.

The need for technicians

There are some big if's in this hopeful picture. The public is still slow to seek precautionary examinations — and these are expensive. An even bigger obstacle is the shortage not only of doctors and personnel trained in these techniques, but also of laboratory facilities for handling slides. It takes a year, Dr. Papanicolaou points out, to train a good cytotechnologist in his technique. Both the Public Health Service and the American Cancer Society are supporting special education for technicians, but Dr. Papanicolaou declares that additional financial help is needed.

Two technical developments will help. Dr. Papanicolaou and his associates have introduced the use of a resin solution, called *diaphane*, that covers the slide with a diaphanous film and keeps it from drying out. Previously slides had to be kept in a wet solution and delivered to a nearby laboratory — if there was one. Now a doctor in a remote village can take smears, protect them with diaphane, and mail them to a competent laboratory.

A machine called the cytoanalyzer, which automatically and tirelessly scans slides of cell specimens, may help with the technician shortage. Two such machines are being used experimentally to weed out negative specimens — normal cells. Positive ones must still be examined in the laboratory. Not yet perfected, the cytoanalyzer has been used so far only for cervical smears.

Now seventy-four, Dr. Papanicolaou is emeritus professor of clinical anatomy at Cornell Medical College, but he is still hard at work directing studies in new applications of his technique. Already thousands of women owe their lives to the detection methods he pioneered. There is hope that these techniques may help extend the lives of many thousands more.

Safety gadgets

Unlike an automobile driver, an airplane pilot cannot always tell when any or all of his wheels are skidding during a braked stop. This undetected skidding often leads to tire damage or blowouts, reduced control of the plane, and costly repairs. Now Goodyear's Aviation Products Division has invented a device that warns a pilot of an impending skid by thumping his foot through a hole in the brake pedal.

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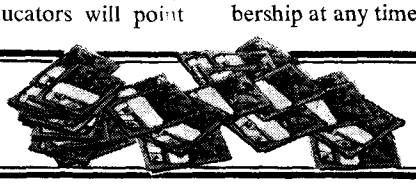

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pilot's foot until he eases brake pressure enough to let the wheel turn freely again. By increasing the pilot's "feel" of the craft, the device permits him to bring it to a halt more quickly, shortening landing runs.

A railroad warning lamp that needs no power source, never has to be refueled, and can serve for ten years or more without maintenance is one of the first consumer products of the atomic age. Developed by United States Radium Corporation, the lamp uses radioactive krypton 85, a gas which is sealed inside the lamp and there reacts with treated phosphor crystals coating the inside of the lens to produce luminescent light.

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Scholars who devote their lifetime to the study of the Scriptures are the first to admit the difficulties that beset them. They know the inspired writings are *not* the clear and easy guide to Christian understanding that so many seem to think. If they were so clear and easy to understand, there would be no need for scholarly inquiry—no excuse for a divided Christianity.

The mere words of the Bible do not always accurately reflect the meaning of their authors. They must be understood in the light of the times in which they were written... in a knowledge of the symbols and language forms they employed... and with a recognition of the need to determine what was meant to be literal and what was meant to be figurative. Who of us has this required knowledge?

The earliest Bible manuscripts, in fact, could have been confusing even to the people of those times. The Old Testament writings—largely in Hebrew—had no spacing between words, no vowels in the text, no punctuation and no capitalization. The vowels had to be supplied from memory! Spacing of words or the insertion of various vowels could markedly change the sense of the words.

But in those times the faithful did not attempt to interpret Scripture for themselves. For the Jewish people in the pre-Christian era, the Synagogue was their voice of spiritual authority; and the Old Testament was preached to them by the Rabbis and fathers of their faith. In like manner, the Catholic Church was the custodian of the inspired writings of the New Testament; and its Priests and teachers were authoritatively preaching the New Testament Gospel nearly four centuries before these writings were collected into a single book and formally declared to be inspired.

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LETTERS TO AND FROM THE EDITOR

Textbooks that don't teach

SIR:

I was for eight years a member of the Manchester, New Hampshire, school board, and I found Oscar Handlin's article, "Textbooks That Don't Teach" (December *Atlantic*), an excellent statement of the problem. But the percentage of teachers who will be able to teach from anything but the trash we now have for textbooks will be very low for years to come.

At present, the only people among the lay public who are really fussing about textbook content — in cities like Manchester, at any rate — are reactionary isolationists, who make large noises about references to the UN, and so forth. Anything that points out values or accomplishments of other lands or governments is equally suspect. It's not the United States government that suppresses information about Soviet achievements, it's the fear of school board members and school administrators and textbook publishers that their jobs and their sales will go if they use anything that might anger the isolationists. And anyone who isn't an isolationist is an egghead, and therefore subversive.

When our teachers get together to decide which textbooks they will buy, if as many as one or two parents have complained about as much as one sentence of a book, they will spend hours reading new books to find the one that doesn't contain such controversial matter. Then the textbook committee of the school board goes over the selections, and those that can read look through them again to see if any subversive messages have escaped the teachers' scrutiny. If they find any, a new, still more bland book is chosen, or the old ones are used again with careful warnings about the offensive parts. Many individual teachers courageously defend their own ideas, but the pressure is overwhelmingly against them.

The term "education" is going to be slowly detached from our public school system as it now is. We put all our active creative restless kids into overcrowded classrooms, relieve them of all responsibility that matters, and combine this torture with forced feeding of stuff that is deliberately bled of anything that can possibly have any meaning to them in terms of excitement and stimulation and therefore growth.

In another ten or fifteen years education will again be for the few, and those few will be the ones who get it in spite of our school system.

One of the quickest remedies would be to let the school children decide what kind of textbooks they would like. They are really very smart underneath, and aren't yet hog-tied by tradition.

MRS. JOHN R. MCLANE, JR.
Manchester, N.H.

SIR:

This is to tell you of the very great pleasure I got from reading Oscar Handlin's article. As one who has been interested in this subject for many years, I was greatly pleased to see how discriminatingly the author discussed his subject. I was particularly interested in noting his criticism of memorizing a textbook or lecture simply to give it back on examination.

I hope Professor Handlin will continue to exert his influence in his future writings. It will greatly help the cause.

WILLIAM H. KILPATRICK
New York City

The advertising "plot"

SIR:

In your January issue, Fairfax M. Cone, the advertising executive, presents an accurate picture of the advertising man's self-concept in his reply ("Advertising Is Not a Plot") to my article in your September issue ("The Growing Power of Admen"). A few of his specific assertions seem worthy of rejoinder.

Mr. Cone, in several instances, put words into my mouth and then berated me for those words he had invented. This was indicated in his title: "Advertising Is Not a Plot: A Reply to Vance Packard." He kept using the word *plot*. I never used the word, nor suggested that a plot existed. Likewise he chided me for being "alarmed" by the fact that competitive products today are often pretty much the same. I've reread my assertion and find no hint whatever of alarm. I was simply stating a fact of modern commercial life.

In another case he takes two sentences of mine separated by more than 1000 words of text and makes them sound as if I uttered them in the same breath. In the first I said "the advertising industry" is spending $10 billion a year in its persuasive efforts. In the far-removed second sentence I said America's 3300 advertising agencies had become a "great sociological battering ram." Ergo, he accuses me of suggesting that the agencies control all the $10 billion being spent in Amer-

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ica for advertising, which, of course, is not the case.

Mr. Cone modestly disavows the charge that advertisers dictate the content of most of our radio and television programs. The fact that the sponsor has the ultimate veto power in shaping the character of most TV shows — and frequently uses it — is accepted as a fact of life by all TV directors I have consulted.

Finally, Mr. Cone challenged my assertion that advertising executives have become "judges with life-and-death power" over many of the mass-circulation magazines. Here I would refer him to the post-mortems made of the reasons for the sudden death of the three great Crowell-Collier magazines in late 1956. At the time of their demise, they were all still fabulously popular with the reading public. Two were at or near all-time highs in circulation. Still all three were killed. One of the principal explanations cited was that they had lost favor with the advertising industry.

VANCE PACKARD
New Canaan, Conn.

Schools of journalism

SIR:

When I was at McCallie Prep School in Chattanooga we had a great teacher who, in moments of frustration, would say, "McGill, I wish I had this great truth engraved on a mallet so that I might hit you on the head with it." I wish I had Louis Lyons' article in the December *Atlantic* ("What a Journalist Needs") engraved on a mallet so that I might hit all managing editors, publishers, city editors, and deans of schools of journalism on the head with it.

One of the disturbing things to me, and one that I have never seen developed, is that today it is almost impossible for a person to get a job on a newspaper unless he or she has graduated from a school of journalism. Outside New York, and possibly one or two other centers, city editors, managing editors, and indeed, many other persons holding down desks are graduates of the most feeble and inefficient schools of journalism. They are not educated. They are not trained. Yet so great is their defensive pride in being a "trained graduate," they will not hire any person who is not a graduate. A man or woman may come in who possesses a broad liberal arts

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How many times have you wished there were some way you could impress another favorably — *get across to him or her your ideas?* That thoughts can be transmitted, received, and understood by others is now scientifically demonstrable. The tales of miraculous accomplishments of mind by the ancients are now known to be fact — not fable. The method whereby these things can be *intentionally*, not accidentally, accomplished has been a secret long cherished by the Rosicrucians — one of the schools of ancient wisdom existing throughout the world. To thousands everywhere, for centuries, the Rosicrucians have privately taught this nearly-lost art of the practical use of mind power.

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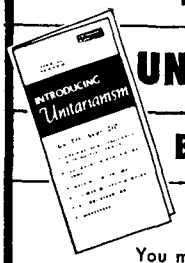

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education, bolstered perhaps by travel and study abroad. In the average newspaper shops such a person would have no chance of a job in competition with a graduate from the pip-squeak school of journalism.

I am fearful that while the Russian satellite may force us to bring some measure of reform to education, the schools of journalism will go merrily along, turning out the sort of misfits designated in Mr. Lyons' article.

RALPH MCGILL, *Editor*
Atlanta Constitution
Atlanta, Ga.

SIR:

Since I happen to be editing a reader on mass culture and communication, I have recently read a great many essays in the field covered by your December Jubilee issue. Never have I found so much insight in so compact a form into the problems and prospects of integrity of expression in a mass-market society. Let's hope that the December *Atlantic* will be part of that humanistic education for the journalist that Mr. Lyons made such an eloquent brief for.

PATRICK D. HAZARD
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pa.

SIR:

I offer you praise for Louis Lyons' "What a Journalist Needs." His writing is lean and muscular and his thoughts incisive and challenging. Printing his comments is a service to every serious journalist in the United States.

Your magazine is a basic tool for any journalist. Your reporting is top-grade, the writing offers the finest example to us, and your viewpoints and thoughts offer a constant challenge.

JAMES H. HOWARD, *Managing Editor*
Laramie Daily Boomerang
Laramie, Wyo.

Reviewer to publisher

SIR:

That was an interesting piece by Alfred A. Knopf in the December *Atlantic* ("Book Publishing: The Changes I've Seen"), and one part of it fascinated me especially: the passage where he seems to suggest that the major function of a book reviewer is to sell books for a publisher. I really believe that Mr. Knopf would welcome the day when

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we all had to be licensed by the Publishers Council. Do you remember when a congressman introduced a bill for licensing drama critics? It turned out that he was a would-be playwright whose early attempts had been panned. Ah, well . . .

JOHN K. HUTCHENS
Book Review, New York Herald Tribune
New York City

Fannie Farmer's 9th

SIR:

Sylvia Wright is unfair to Fannie Farmer!

She has also ruined my morning. I was sitting placidly in the kitchen, munching the *Atlantic* along with my corn muffins, when I came on Sylvia Wright's piece, "Chowder Is Out" (November *Atlantic*).

I read it, and chuckled. And then I began to wonder, and I looked up at the shelf where my wife keeps the cookbooks she uses as a point of departure for her adventures in creative cooking, and there was *The New Fannie Farmer Boston Cooking-School Cook Book*, ninth revised edition, 1951, and it did not have any such cluttered-up recipe for New England Clam Chowder as Sylvia Wright attacked; nor did it include those Cigarettes à la Prince Henry and Mock Almonds at which she jibed.

Just beyond the 1951 *Fannie Farmer* stood the *Boston Cooking-School Cook Book*, sixth revised edition, 1936. It did include those horrors. Maybe the seventh edition (1941) did too, and the eighth (1946). I don't know. [They did — Editor.] Nor do I know whether they were hangovers from the second edition (1906), which must have been the last with which Fannie Farmer herself had anything to do, for she died in 1915, three years before the appearance of the third edition (1918). I gather from such prefaces as are available to me that Fannie Farmer's niece-in-law, Wilma Lord Perkins, has been responsible for the changes in recent editions, including the omission of the recipe for Orange Pekoe Ice Cream.

Was *Fannie Farmer*, first edition, 1896, simpler or more complicated than *Fannie Farmer*, sixth edition, revised 1936? Did she recognize regional differences? Did her contemporaries and predecessors? I'd like to know.

LEWIS GANNETT
West Cornwall, Conn.

"I HAVE A SON I'VE NEVER SEEN"*

"I have a son that I have never seen, whose language I do not speak and who does not understand mine.

Today, and every summer day, tourists from many lands throng the town of Delphi in Greece. They come to view those scenes made sacred through literature and history. Near this town lives my son Nikolaos.

In my mind's eye I see him now, walking those well worn paths, climbing the craggy hills, attending the quaint old school. I see him visiting the old, battered, bullet-scarred church. I see him going home to the tiny one-room house where he lives with his mother and sister. In my imagination I step through the door. I see the one hard bed, the crude table and bench, the battered box that serves as a chest and the makeshift stove. I count the ornaments of the place — a few flowers in a tiny jug and love. The young mother works, when there is work, as a laborer on a nearby farm. The work is heavy and the hours are long. She is paid ten dollars a month. One fifty of this she pays for rent.

There was a war. Remember? War took this child's father and made him my son. I am proud of him. His frequent letters in the characters of his own tongue are, when translated, the most beautiful literature I can read. I am proud of him.

In our world today there are millions of boys and girls who through war and horror have lost one or both parents. These children know no real home. They never have enough to eat. They have no proper clothes. They share but little love. They have no medical attention. There is no provision for their education. They have no future as we understand that term.

There is in our country an organization known as The Foster Parents' Plan. Through this Plan you may adopt one of these children. You may make yourself responsible for the health and education of one of these little ones. You may become a father or a mother in reality. You may know the joy and satisfaction a child's letters bring. You can know that somewhere in the world a child's prayers, on your behalf, rise like sweet incense to the Infinite. And you can see in your own life how they are answered."

** Written by Foster Parent Roland Porter about his "adopted" child.*

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THE ATLANTIC

CAN THE WEST REGAIN THE INITIATIVE?

BY BARBARA WARD

"Rocket for rocket," says BARBARA WARD, *the former foreign editor of the London* ECONOMIST, *"the Western powers can catch up with the Russians. But speeding up the arms race will not end the tension. Is there an alternative which does not entail the appeasement of Russian imperialism?" This is her objective in the article which follows.*

If the Russians, by launching the Sputniks, testing intercontinental missiles, and pushing the Middle East to the brink of war, have shocked the Western allies out of their recent trance-like condition, they will have made the disastrous events of 1957 a turning point for the saner policies in the Free World. For some years, we have had neither Western unity nor Western policy. The partners have disarmed themselves, fallen into economic stagnation, quarreled with one another, and lost sight of any larger objective. If, from this combination of complacency and inefficiency, the Russians have pried us loose, Sputnik may after all prove a benevolent satellite.

But the question remains: Toward what ends should a revived sense of Western purpose be directed? There are, after all, two choices. One is to do what we say we have been doing but in fact have failed to do: to make real again a policy of effective containment. Its steps are to reverse Atlantic disarmament, to pull level in the missile race, to strengthen with more aid and arms the anti-Communist forces round the world, and to make a new effort to woo neutral opinion, particularly in countries such as India and Egypt, where economic pressures are acute and growing worse. Such consistent and powerful containment, though expensive, would undoubtedly be better than the phony cut-rate containment we have been trying to practice. But its limitation is that it gives no wider perspective to Western diplomacy than that of countering Communism. This leaves the initiative where it lay through most of 1957 — in the Russians' hands. Moreover, it rivets Western attention to the aims and practices of Communism, whereas it is highly arguable that Communism today is a symptom of our real problems and not their first cause.

Communism alone cannot be blamed for the economic stagnation and currency troubles within the Atlantic community. Communism is only one factor in Eastern Europe's restiveness under Russian imperial control. A greater danger lies in some new explosion of outraged local nationalism — in East Germany, in Poland. In the Middle East, the real danger is the manipulation by Russia of local national ambitions in such a way that they, too, may explode into war between local blocs, each backed by a rival great power.

And in the Middle East as in Asia, poverty and frustration lend an extra edge to the clash of nationalist rivalries. Communism does not account for Egypt's declining standards, as the birth rate increases and irrigation does not. In

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Java and in the Indian state of Kerala, recent Communist electoral victories followed and did not cause the unemployment, the pressure on resources, the frustrated literacy which reach their Asian peak in these two underdeveloped areas.

THE LAWLESSNESS OF FORCE

The real dangers are deeper, older, and more widespread than Communism, the first and worst among them being the world's total anarchy of national sovereignty. Every nation claims in the end to be judge in its own cause and to keep its own armed force as final arbiter. Whether it is Russia clamping down its control on Germans, Poles, and Hungarians, or China suppressing Tibetan resistance, or Egypt struggling for Middle Eastern leadership against Iraq, or Syria accepting Soviet arms presumably to fight Israel, or India rejecting all compromise over Kashmir — the root cause is the same: the lawless claim that force decides the final issues. Nor are the Western powers themselves out of the jungle. In spite of their decencies and inhibitions, the British were ready with force over Suez, and America's methods were not very different in Guatemala.

Moreover, the anarchy is becoming steadily more dangerous. This is not only because annihilation lies within the range of modern weapons. The revived divisions of the Cold War increase the risk that these weapons be used. Politically, no more certain recipe for war exists than the grouping of small powers into hostile blocs, each under the patronage of a rival great power. Today the fatal pattern is being repeated which turned the Balkans into a cockpit for five decades and ended in World War I. At the same time, nothing makes local nationalist rivalry grow more steadily toward flash point than the deterioration of economic standards and the failure of hope. That condition, too, is present in the Middle East and Asia. Thus while the Western powers talk of Communism, what they have on their hands is something much more dire — it is the classical recipe for growing turbulence and final war.

ALTERNATIVE TO WAR

It is for this reason that the Western powers should be prepared, in the face of recurring crises in the Middle East and Europe, to reconsider their policies. No doubt they can once again make containment effective. Rocket for rocket, they can catch up with the Russians. But speeding up the arms race will not end the tension. Is there an alternative, an alternative, that is to say, which does not entail the appeasement of Russian imperialism?

In theory, there is an answer, and one to which most of us give a rational assent — together with the proviso that it is, of course, perfectly impracticable. The alternative is to achieve in the international community the conditions which alone spare us from killing and being killed inside domestic society. There, we give up the right to private violence and accept peaceful methods for settling disputes. We accept a police force and a system of justice and arbitration. Also, by a more recent insight, we try to prevent the economic pressures and despairs of society from envenoming disputes to the point where violence is their natural denouement. Welfare is seen to be the prop of justice. No society has ever evolved any other way of achieving civil peace.

This is the *rational* solution. But the immediate question is whether, in the present crises of arming and counterarming, of rockets poised in threat and nations brought to the brink of war at shorter and shorter intervals, the alternative of international control and pacification has any *practical* value.

Here the test must lie where the present risk is greatest — in the Middle East. Different elements of an international settlement have been proposed, discussed, and even partially practiced in the last ten years, but they have not been incorporated in a coherent policy, and they have never achieved the assent of all the powers concerned. An international guarantee of Middle Eastern frontiers was foreshadowed in the 1950 agreement between France, Britain, and America to stabilize Israel's boundaries. America's failure early in 1956 to reaffirm this pledge was one element in the tragedy of Suez. But it has been partially redeemed by the Eisenhower Doctrine, which guarantees the local states of the area against one form of disorder — an attack from Russia. One can say, therefore, that an international guarantee is not a totally new departure.

Nor are the sanctions needed to secure it. The Middle East is already the scene of experiments in the international policing of troubled frontiers. The UN observers supervising Israel's frontiers, the Emergency Force dispatched after the Suez crisis, the immediate UN cognizance of danger on the Turkish-Syrian border are all precedents for an orderly long-term international policing system throughout the area designed to underpin the general guarantee of good order. Such a system would, however, run into impossibly heavy weather if the Middle Eastern states continued their efforts to pile up armaments. So far, the Russian suggestion of an agreed limit to the flow of arms has been dismissed as a subterfuge aimed at dismantling the defenses of the pro-Western nations in the area. But as one element in a genuine policing system it is worth examination.

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In the Middle East — as indeed anywhere else — hopes of orderly pacification turn ultimately upon "the general welfare," and there are few areas where this wears a more dubious aspect. The oil states have the resources; Kuwait is swamped in them. But Egypt's poverty is intensified by each year's increment of births; Jordan is a pensioner; and Turkey, supposed bastion of the West, has lived on the edge of desperate economic stringency ever since its plea, in 1954, for a stabilized loan of $300 million was rejected.

Here, again, there is no shortage of proposals for greater economic stability. The project of a general development bank financed out of a proportion of oil revenues contributed both by governments and by oil companies has its supporters. Egyptian irrigation and the development of the Nile valley had reached the blueprint stage before a Western withdrawal from the scheme was carried out, with the maximum loss of face for Egypt. Now the catastrophes of the last year could be used as a spur to a new effort — preferably under the auspices of the World Bank — to make a joint attack on the obstacles to development in the region.

RUSSIA IN THE MIDDLE EAST

It is thus not impossible, by picking over existing policies in the Middle East, to piece together a coherent scheme for international guarantees, policing, and economic rehabilitation. But would it offer any hope in terms of practical politics? The first objection is that it brings the Russians squarely into the Middle East. Their guarantee would be essential; they could make or break the arms embargo; they would insist on the Communist bloc taking some share in the police forces; and their economic aid would remain competitive and subversive unless it was geared to a wider international development scheme. But of all the fanciful thinking current in the West today, perhaps the most naïve is the idea that the Russians are not in the Middle East already. Geography, not ideology, puts them there.

If great powers are going to bid for local supporters in the Middle East — and that, after all, is how the Baghdad Pact looks in Russian eyes — Russia will be in there playing politics too. And she has two trumps. The West, not Russia, was until fairly recently imperial master in the Arab world. And Russia has abandoned Israel, the only natural enemy the Arabs universally recognize. There is thus no way of organizing an anti-Communist alliance in the Middle East which does not invite an answering Communist-backed bloc. The only way out of the impasse is no blocs at all — either the weak, defenseless absence of blocs called neutralism or the international control which is here proposed. We do not know whether the Russians, having achieved such gratifying results from their anti-anti-Communist policies, will now accept a policing system which transcends the competition of rival blocs. The best hope for their acquiescence is that they are cautious enough to feel the risk of the local situation getting out of hand.

But can one call the Arabs cautious? Would the smaller powers accept an alternative to the heady mixture of men marching, MIGs flying, and fresh imperialist plots uncovered on alternate Mondays? *C'est magnifique* even if it is very nearly *la guerre.* Yet there perhaps lies the hope. At first, playing one great power off against another gives a pleasurable sense of importance and skill. But it is not long before the player becomes the plaything. The October crisis suddenly showed the proud Arab world not as an autonomous, self-determining area but as a football in world politics. The graver Arabs — and among them one can on occasion include President Nasser — may not be averse to an international policy which permits them to retreat from the physical risk of war on their own territory and from the psychological humiliation of appearing as puppets in someone else's show.

Moreover, the scheme has positive inducements. The guarantee of frontiers covers the risk which the Arabs conceive, probably rightly, to be more real than a direct Russian attack. The Israeli army can make short work of any Arab force, and Israel is growing. Outside help might counter this imbalance, but only at the risk of devastating local war. Guaranteed frontiers are thus the best security available.

The Western powers have not really considered seriously the role of economic inducements. Tension in the Middle East rose to crisis pitch and has remained there ever since the breaking off of the Aswan Dam negotiations. The conjunction is at least significant, and Egypt may not be lost to moderation if moderation irrigates more land and feeds the hungry new mouths.

There is, however, one psychological difficulty which probably cannot be overcome within the framework of the Middle East. The Arab states are most unlikely to accept any solution which appears to set them apart as a group of immature, untrustworthy, second-class world citizens. At the time of the Suez crisis, one reason for Egypt's passionate rejection of international control of the canal was its belief that the Western powers wanted it to safeguard themselves against Egyptian inefficiency and untrustworthiness. The British, Egypt pointed out, had rejected international control when they were in charge. The Americans

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ruled it out for Panama. So the scheme appeared to be simply discrimination against them as Egyptians. They are unlikely to feel more reconciled to a general international control system which singles out the Middle East for discriminatory treatment. Is there any way to convince them that, on the contrary, it is simply the local application of a general rule?

THE TENSIONS IN EUROPE

It is at this point that the ambiguous Western attitude toward international solutions begins to be apparent, for in fact we do tend to think of them as more applicable to others than to ourselves. It is not, of course, impossible to conceive of policies which might convince the Arabs — or the Asians or the Africans — that white men no longer consider themselves as a race apart. The tensions in Europe are no less dangerous than those of the Levant and in some degree spring from the same cause — the existence of rival blocs of states supported in their hostility by outside great powers. If there is an argument in the Middle East for seeking to substitute an international system of control for local armed rivalry with outside backing, the argument is as strong in Europe. In fact, it is stronger, for the division of Germany is a refinement of instability not present in the Middle East.

The Russians have proposed in the past the withdrawal from Europe of American and Russian forces and the establishment in their place of a mutual, general security pact. Whether, after Eastern Europe's demonstration of its fanatical anti-Communism, they would be prepared to follow up the proposal, is an open question, but it is an added argument for the Western powers to try to find out. The Western fear is, of course, that the withdrawal of the American "tripwire" would leave Russians able to dominate Europe by sheer bulk. But neither a general security pact nor an international security system entails the ending of the American or indeed the British commitment to Europe. In fact, they postulate what might be called an Eisenhower Doctrine for the whole area. The difference would lie in the "tripwire." Under a general security system set up under the auspices of the United Nations, a control commission with regional officers and police groups would have the supervision of troubled areas and would provide the warning signal for any growing risk of aggression. And if, in spite of international supervision, the Russians were tempted to reinvade, the deterrent would be — as it is now — the risk of American bombs and rockets on Moscow.

The rational hope, however, would be that a withdrawal of both great powers from the brinks which their policies have helped to create — in the Levant, in Europe — would lead gradually to a *détente* and in time to a readiness to include not only their neighbors but themselves in the orderly working of an international system.

This, we should make clear, the Western powers do not propose at present. Their careful joint plan before the Disarmament Commission covers the controlled reduction of some arms and the elimination of others. But apart from inspection, it leaves the principle of national, sovereign armies intact. It is in fact a retreat from the bold approach of America's Baruch Plan, which proposed the international monopoly of all atomic energy and hence of the ultimate weapons. Yet so long as national armies retain their autonomy, there is probably no method by which local areas can be pacified by international means. Small states will demand military sovereignty — and atomic bombs — in the name of equality. Anarchy will remain the final condition.

The myriad sovereignties of the world can in fact be brought under minimum control only when states, like individuals, give up the right to settle disputes by violence. The fervent, newly enfranchised nationalisms of Asia and Africa cannot be expected to give a lead here. It can come only from mature, settled, national states of the West. If, the next time Mr. Khrushchev proposes with his usual exuberance: "Let us scrap our armies now," there were an instant urgent Western response: "Yes, and let us establish and arm an international police force to take their place," it might be possible to let into the whole stale, weary disarmament wrangle a larger aim, a wider vision.

The Russians may well refuse. Then let them be faced in season and out of season with the West's standing offer. Let representatives of neutral opinion be added to the Disarmament Commission to learn at first hand the West's sincerity. The Western powers need not be content with conditional offers. As a pledge of their determination, they could propose international authority at once for areas where Russia's writ and veto do not run. Nothing prevents America from proposing for Panama the international regime it supported at Suez. A British offer of Cyprus as an international police base with local autonomy might create conditions to which Greek, Turk, and Briton could agree.

THE RULE OF LAW

The effort of imagination needed to make such a break from the closed arena of the Cold War is no doubt tremendous — though presumably it is no greater than the thrust of mind that is sending satellites into outer space. And it is rooted in two of

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the West's most fruitful insights into the nature of peaceful society: the supremacy of law and the acceptance of the common welfare.

Today, is it too visionary to suggest that a start be made to base world order on these two minimum principles? It cannot be a fully articulated legal and political system. It will break down if it seeks to set up a formal world government with states' rights and suffrages. But it can begin with an agreement to abandon violence in the settlement of issues and to police that agreement through minimum organs of international supervision. In aiming at such a system, and giving it a solid background of economic development and hope, the Western governments would be taking a first step toward repeating in world society the ultimate safeguard of their domestic security.

It is not only their own positive principles that the Western powers would be advancing with such a policy. They could do something more. They could begin again to speak for the submerged hopes of all mankind. The language of anti-Communism does not lend itself to deeper human aspirations. It insists too much on the world's divisions. It proposes side-taking. It has, all too often, an unattractive ring of righteousness as though the Western powers were absolutely free of the self-seeking and self-regarding nationalism which underlies the world's tragic anarchy. In Asia, especially, where four hundred years of colonial experience dictate the determination not to take sides, much deep and genuine emotion for peaceful order has been lost in stagnant neutralism. Yet India is the land where the tradition of Asoka's peaceful statesmanship based upon the orderly renunciation of violence is still a great community-making ideal and, in the Ghandian tradition of nonviolence, presided at the birth of India's independence. Contact could be made with these ancient traditions if the Western powers would seek with all the passion and urgency at their command to establish the rule of controlled and policed "nonviolence" and to back this rule of law by generous, sustained, and farsighted economic aid.

It is even within the bounds of possibility that such a new direction of allied policy could ultimately have its effect on the Communist great powers. The Communist states are in theory committed to the vision of a peaceful, coöperative world. At present, the gap between action and theory creates some of the most repellent characteristics of Soviet and Chinese policy. We have rightly coined phrases such as Newspeak and Doublethink for a propaganda which talks of "people's democracies" or "the liberation" of Eastern Europe. But Doublethink could conceivably work in reverse. Millions of educated Russians are being taught the slogans of brotherhood and international unity. Suppose they believe what they are taught? Suppose, instead of Doublethink, they think? We know there were disturbances in Russian universities after the Hungarian revolt and, as every absolute regime has learned, the most dangerous questions are the questions asked by the young. Threats of encirclement, of foreign hostility, of a world-wide anti-Communist plot may silence the questioning. But the Kremlin's task in convincing the Russians of this threat would be infinitely more difficult if Western insistence were not upon anti-Communism but upon that peaceful, coöperative world order in which Communists are taught to believe.

THE CONDITIONS OF SURVIVAL

But none of this is possible without a radical recasting of Western policy, and the tragedy is that an anti-Communist crusade coupled with a string of defensive alliances and an all-out search for the ultimate weapon fits into the old familiar pattern of international anarchy. It leaves the illusion of absolute national self-determination intact. Even though one wind blowing unexpectedly may send a neighbor's strontium 90 across the defenseless frontiers of the air, down below on solid earth we cling to those frontiers as though they still were under our control.

If, however, we had meant to leave total state sovereignty intact, we should have shackled the scientists before they split the atom and traveled faster than sound. No society can survive if everything changes but its institutions; no society can stay sane if no one is to innovate except the technologists. Our tragedy, our madness today is that our deepest instincts resist the innovations our reason tells us are the condition of survival.

In the age of atomic power, guided missiles, and supersonic flight, we cling to the illusion of inviolate frontiers, for they are the frontiers of the myth of absolute self-determination. Total sovereignty is to the state what egoism is to the individual — the last, holiest, most highly treasured source of all disaster. We gain personal happiness only by transcending this vociferous self. We gained order in domestic society by abandoning the citizen's claim to settle his disputes in his own way. Now science has thrust at us a new choice: to transcend the claims of total state sovereignty by creating minimum standards of international order. We in the West will be untrue to all that is best in our great humane tradition if, at this last supreme test, our courage, imagination, and faith in man's rational future are not equal to the task.

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An Atlantic Story

COURTSHIP of the BLUE WIDOW

by Harry Mark Petrakis

Harry Mark Petrakis was thirty-three years old, happily married, the father of two sons, and busily employed in a steel company in Pittsburgh before he succeeded in breaking into atlantic *print. His story, "Pericles on 34th Street," won the Atlantic "First" Award for 1957; this is his second story, and he is now at work on a novel.*

Something happened to me the first time I saw the Widow Angela in the grocery of old Mantaris. More than just the restless stirring of flesh a man feels in the presence of a lovely woman. I was bothered as I am often bothered when I see a woman I like I cannot at once touch. After she walked out with the bread and cheese she had bought, I asked old Mantaris about her.

He rubbed his big knuckled fingers across the leathery skin of his cheeks. He shook his head sadly. He drew a long breath and sighed.

"She is a woman, that one," he said. "She was born and reared in the mountains of the old country. A grown woman at fourteen. She came to this country and married a giant of a man who worked in produce. Then her man died."

"How long has her man been dead?" I asked.

He shook his head slowly, trying to remember.

"Two years," he said. "Maybe a little longer. He was a Spartan. A big man with the arms of a wrestler. She has been in mourning ever since."

Two years and maybe longer. Too long for a woman built as the Widow Angela was built to set a seal upon her heart.

Then I understood what had bothered me about her. She was tall and dark with dark hair pinned back into a prim bun. Her face was pale and clean of powder or rouge. Her lips were full but untouched by lipstick. The black dress she wore was a plain dark folding of cloth high across her breasts and full across her thighs. She was without any of the artifices women use to point up their womanliness. In some strange way this made her more beautiful than any woman I had ever seen.

"She sleeps in a widow's bed," Mantaris said, and his voice shook with woe. "Her good husband sleeps in the cold earth." He paused and licked his thin dried lips. "I saw her once at a picnic with him some years ago. She danced in a line of women, taller than any other. That day she was not pale-cheeked as she is now but hot with life. Not one of your withered city women but a mountain woman wild with the flow of heroic blood."

"You are a patriarch now," I said. "A recorder of history and a recounter of legends. Stop bagging your bread and slicing your cheese long enough to advise me where she lives."

Suddenly one of his big long fingers pointed straight at my head like a gun. His leathery cheeks quivered and his eyes burned. "I know who you are," he said. "You are a Turk bent upon pillage and rape!" He clenched his fist and beat his chest. "You do not see the tragic nobleness of her grief. To see her now and remember her as she was hurts me here." He touched the region of his heart. His voice sharpened with contempt. "You are touched much further down."

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"My friend," I said gently. "You do me an injustice. I too believe in the nobility of grief. Remember, I too am a Greek."

He shrugged and rippled noise through his lips. "It is true you are Greek," he said. "But there are Greeks and Greeks. Some are the descendants of lions, and others . . ."

I put my finger expectantly to my nose.

"Others come from goats," he said.

"She is a lovely woman," I said.

The hard lines of his face softened. "Yes . . ." he said. "Yes."

"A face like Helen to launch a thousand ships," I said.

He shook his head approvingly. "Yes," he said.

"She has breasts like great cabbages," I said.

He almost leaped to the ceiling. When he came down with his face flaming he slammed his open palm upon the counter. "Your head is a cabbage!" he yelled. "You have no respect!"

"You are right," I said. "My old dried-up friend, you are right."

He looked at me scornfully.

"What can you know," he said. "What can a young goat know of dignity and beauty?"

"A woman is going to waste while you call me names," I said. "I leave you to your cabbages."

"Then leave your head!" he shouted. "I'll weigh it with the rest."

I waved back from the door.

The next day was Sunday. All the night before I had tossed restlessly with dreams. I dreamed of the pale-faced Widow Angela whose body looked long asleep. There were fine cabbages in my dreams and an old toothless lion who guarded the gate to the patch.

In the early morning I shaved carefully and dressed and left my rooms. I crossed the square past the closed stores. I went to the church beside the Legion hall. I waited outside. From within I could hear the full deep tones of the organ and the chanting of the priest.

I waited there until the services ended. Until the doors were opened and the first men and women came out. When I saw Mantaris I called to him. He looked about and blinked in the sunlight and then saw me and came closer.

"Watch for her," I said. "Watch for the Widow."

He looked at me in shock and surprise. "You are a crazy man!" he said. "Is your head on straight or do I call for help?"

"If you don't introduce me," I said, "I will accost her myself, here in front of the church."

"You would not dare!" he said, and then breathing hard he shook his head slowly. "You would. You are part Turk."

Then I saw her and my fingers tightened again around his arm. She came out into the sunlight and the black dress she wore saddened my heart. She wore a small dark hat over her dark hair and her cheeks were still pale and she walked stiffly without notice of those who walked around her.

The old man trembled at my side.

"God help me," he said, and he crossed himself quickly and I gave him a little push and we started through the crowd. A short way down the stone steps we caught up to her and he called out her name and she stopped and turned. He looked around once more desperately as if thinking of escape and then spoke quickly. "Good morning, Mrs. Angela," he said. I stood close behind him, a somber look upon my cheeks. "It is a bright morning," he said.

"Good morning, Mr. Mantaris," she said. "Yes, it is a bright morning."

I punched the old man in the back and he jumped. "Mrs. Angela," he said, and he seemed to be having trouble getting the rest out. "May I present Mr. Larakis."

"How do you do, Mrs. Angela," I said, and I was very careful not to smile. One does not laugh before the watch fires of grief.

She looked from the old man to me and her face darkened slightly. The old man shifted in some sort of agony from one foot to the other. Then she nodded an acknowledgment slowly and turned to walk on.

I punched the old man in the ribs again to follow her. He turned on me snarling like he was going to take a chance and clout me. He would not budge. He stood like one of the pillars of the Parthenon. I left him spitting at me under his breath.

I had to run several steps to catch up to her. "Excuse me, Mrs. Angela," I said. "May I walk with you to the next corner? We are going the same way."

She turned again and looked at me darkly. I think what saved me was the cool and impersonal expression on my face. A shadow of a smile would have whipped me right there. She nodded without speaking and I fell into step beside her.

We walked silently for a little way and the cars passed in the street and the spring sun shone brightly in the sky.

"Forgive me, Mrs. Angela," I said. "I knew your husband. I was grieved when I heard of his death. I have been out of the city a long time."

She looked at me with those deep dark eyes and there was nothing I could understand on her face. Then her cheeks loosened just a little. "Thank you," she said quietly. "It was a terrible loss."

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I spoke softly and sympathetically. "A fine man," I said. "Did he ever wrestle? I do not remember ever seeing a man with stronger-looking arms."

She shook her head slowly. I was sorry for the remembered pain returned to her cheeks. I am not a sadist. But this initial surgery was necessary. "He was not a wrestler," she said. "But he was very strong."

"I believe he once mentioned to me he came from Sparta?" I said.

"Yes," she said. "Kostas was a Spartan."

"Of course," I said. "Where else? Sparta stands for strength and courage."

We had reached the corner and she stopped and looked at me again. "He would have been pleased to have heard you say that," she said. "Thank you, Mr. . . ."

"Larakis," I said. "Mike Larakis."

"Thank you, Mr. Larakis," she said. "Now I turn here."

I took a deep breath. I had to proceed carefully. Whoso diggeth a pit might fall therein. "Mrs. Angela," I said. "Please do not think I am disrespectful. It is only I have not been back in the city very long. My old friends are moved and gone. Can you understand what it is to be lonely?"

That one was a beauty. I could see the shaft of the arrow sticking out of her wonderful chest.

"I know what loneliness is," she said. She spoke those words with real feeling.

I pushed my advantage. "Would it be too forward of me to think you might permit me to have dinner with you?" I asked. "Some quiet restaurant where we might sit and talk?"

She looked at me closely and I felt unrest under the intensity of her gaze. Those big dark eyes were more than ornaments on the Widow Angela. Her soul poured through them. "I do not go out socially," she said. "Not since my Kostas died."

"Forgive me," I said. "I was too forward. I have offended you. I am sorry."

I apologize very well. Frankly, it is not an easily acquired skill.

She shook her head. "Please," she said. "I was not offended. Just that it has been so long."

"A little food," I said. "A little quiet talk with a friend. Surely to allow yourself that is not to show disloyalty to a sacred memory."

I could see her making up her mind. Her skin without make-up gleamed cleanly. I felt a smarting in my fingers. Sweet is a grief well ended.

"All right," she said.

"Thank you," I said humbly. "You are kind to a lonely man." I paused and looked thoughtfully into space. This needed a clincher so she would not change her mind. "I regret I cannot make it tonight," I said. "There is a meeting of one of the church organizations I have just joined." I paused again. "I would rather sit and talk with you," I said.

"You must attend your meeting," she said firmly. "We will make it another night."

"Tomorrow night," I said. "If you are free."

"Tomorrow night," she said.

"I will call for you," I said. "Do you live close by?"

"The brownstone house," she said. "That one across the street. I have the first-floor apartment."

"At six?" I said.

"At six," she said.

"Thank you," I said.

She turned and walked away and I watched with intense interest the fine great sway of her marvelous thighs and savored my small pleasure like a general who had won the first skirmish but needed yet to win the war.

On the following afternoon I stopped for a moment in the grocery. Mantaris was bagging warm bread from the oven in back of the store. As I walked in he raised his head and sniffed as if an animal had entered.

"Good evening, old man," I said.

He stood glaring at me.

"I merely stopped by to let you know," I said. "Tonight I dine with the Widow Angela."

"You lie!" he said.

"This is a serious matter," I said. "I never lie where love is involved."

"Love!" The old man looked as if he might strangle on the word. "You would not know love if it had teeth and bit you in the ass."

"I will let that pass," I said. "Tonight I dine with a Queen and feel kindly toward the peasants."

"Get out, boofo!" he cried. "Go and drop dead!"

I left the store smiling and went home to dress.

At six that evening I rang the bell of the Widow Angela. She opened the door and she was ready and we said good evening to one another and commented on the fine spring weather. She went to put on her hat and came back and we walked down the stairs. I led her toward the car. She shook her head.

"Such a lovely evening," she said. "Let us walk. There is a little restaurant a few blocks from here that I often pass and have never entered. May we go there tonight?"

"Certainly," I said.

The restaurant she had spoken of was a small one off Dart Street. A little bell rang over the door as we entered and we walked down a few

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stairs into a small room with a row of booths and candles on the tables. I could not have picked a better atmosphere myself.

A small dark man with a heavy mustache greeted us and ushered us to a booth. We sat down. I ordered a glass of wine. She hesitated, and finally nodded. We ordered another glass. I sat back and looked at her. Her face in the candled light of the booth was a page from an Old Testament psalm. David to Bathsheba. And Solomon's song.

"You are very kind," I said, "to take pity on a lonely man."

She shook her lovely head. "You must not say that," she said. "I have been lonely too. It was generous of you to ask."

I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I caused the Widow's heart to sing with joy.

"You are shy," she said. "I understood that yesterday when we walked from church. You must try to make friends."

I was trying to make friends Angela, Angela, you have no idea how hard I was trying to make friends.

"I cannot help myself," I said. "As a child I was shy. I have never fully gotten over it."

The waiter brought the bottle of wine. He poured from it into our glasses. The wine gleamed dark red. "In wine there is truth," I said.

She raised the glass to her lips. When she lowered it the stain of wine glittered wetly on her mouth. "What is the truth?" she said.

"That you are lonely," I said. "That you mourn golden days that can never be again."

A sob seemed to catch in her throat. "Never again?" she said.

"Not in the same way," I hastened to add. "The past has its place. Memories remain sacred, but one must somehow live."

I filled her glass again with wine. For a girl out of circulation for over two years she knocked off that wine like a champion.

"There are nights I cannot sleep," she said. "Nights when I lie awake and hear strange noises in the dark."

"Loneliness," I said. "There is nothing more terrible than loneliness." As an alternative, Larakis offers himself as chosen comforter. Lucky Angela.

We ordered a little food. I poured another glass of wine. In a little while bright patches of red adorned her cheeks and her teeth gleamed even and white when she smiled

"It seems so long ago," she said, "since I have sat like this and tasted wine and talked a little."

"You are still young," I said. "You have your life ahead of you."

"And you?" she said. "You are young and have known loneliness. Is your life still ahead of you?"

"For both of us," I said.

She paused and took another sip of wine and held her head a little to the side watching me intently. "I am glad," she said.

There was a bright spring moon high over the city as we walked home together past the houses and the stores and I did not even try to hold her hand.

After she had opened the door to her apartment she stood in the doorway weaving just a little. The scent of midnight tables was about her body. Aroma of walnuts, wine, and fruit. "Will you come in for coffee?" she said. Her face was hidden in the shadows and I could not see her eyes.

I was tempted. But as an expert in such matters I knew it was too soon. Timing in these things is the principal thing. Therefore if thou would emulate the master, get timing. And with all thy getting, get understanding.

"It is too late for you," I said. "You have been kind and I will not impose further upon your kindness."

"You are a good and gentle man," she said.

She was right. Only fools make a mock at sin.

"Tomorrow night?" I said.

"Tomorrow night," she said. She closed the door.

A WEEK passed. A week in which I saw the Widow Angela every night. Twice we ate in the little restaurant with the candles. Once we drove to an inn outside the city and ate beside a tree-shaded lake. Once we went to a movie and it was a sad love story and she cried. Several times after taking her home I stopped in for a little midnight coffee. She showed me an album of family photographs. She had been a remarkably well-developed child. In later photographs I could not help being a little glad that I was not conducting this raid for plunder while her husband was alive. He looked a real brute of a man. I had no doubts, however, of my ability to equal or surpass his capacities in the main event.

All that week I never once tried to touch the Widow Angela. Several times in the past few nights I had the feeling she would not have objected too strongly if I had kissed her good night. I refuse to match for pennies when a chance for a gold piece is involved.

Late Saturday afternoon it began to rain. I stopped in the grocery with two bottles of dark wine that were wrapped as gifts. Mantaris stared at the bottles.

"Won't be long now," I said.

He glared at me and pulled fiercely at his nose. "Why don't you leave her alone?" he said. "Why

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not a woman of the street or some other wench? Why the Widow Angela?"

"She is the Rose of Sharon," I said, "and the Lily of the Valley."

"You are a goat," he said. "You hold nothing sacred."

"You are a poor loser," I said.

"In the end you will give up," he said. "You will get nowhere with her."

"I will not give up," I said. "I am getting somewhere very fast."

"Get out!" he said. "You are a Turk! I spit back to your father's father!"

I looked around. "You have no fresh cabbages today?" I said.

He got red in the face and started to splutter.

"It does not matter," I said. "Tonight I think I pluck my own. Tonight, old man."

I heaped the coals of fire upon his head. He stood there and did not say another word.

On my way to the Widow it began to rain again. I ran from the car to the stairs making sure not to drop the wine. She stood smiling, waiting in the doorway. "Let me take your wet things," she said.

I gave her my raincoat and my hat. I carried the wine in myself. "A bad night," I said.

"It is very bad," she said.

"A good night to sit inside," I said. "The rain has chilled me."

She stood for a moment without answering and the light of the lamp shone across her face. Her lips were red with a touch of lipstick and there were marks of rouge upon her cheeks.

"I don't mind," she said.

She brought a corkscrew and little decorative glasses for the wine. I opened one of the bottles. We sat together on the couch. We heard the whipping sound of wind and rain against the window.

"It has been a nice week," she said.

"I have enjoyed it very much," I said.

I refilled our glasses of wine. We sat without speaking for a little while with only our hands moving our glasses to our lips. The room seemed guarded like a valley between great mountains.

There was a record player in the corner. I got off the couch and walked to it and snapped the switch. The turntable revolved and the needle lowered upon a record. An old country mountain dance. Angela sat watching me from the couch.

"Come and dance," I said. "I have seen you dance before."

"Where?" she asked.

"At a picnic," I said. "You were taller than any woman in the line. You were beautiful and full of fire."

She stood up. The music rang the quick shrill melody. She came slowly to the machine. "I do not dance any more," she said.

"Why not?" I said.

"It is not right," she said.

I reached out and very gently touched the hair of the Widow Angela. I might have waited until she had more wine but I was not made of stone. Besides, there was something about that moment, something in the way she stood. I knew this was it.

She turned her head slightly and my hand fell away. For a moment I saw her face with the sad dark eyes and the full lips like moist fruit before a hungry man. "You must not touch me," she said.

I touched the nape of her neck, feeling the slight teasing softness of her hair across my fingers. "I want to touch you," I said, and I really meant that line. "Angela, Angela, all my body wants to touch you."

I saw the first press of uncertain breathing stir her breasts. She knew I had seen and the moment tightened under her disorder. "It is not right," she said. Her hand moved uneasily to her cheek. "It is not right that he should lie in the cold ground and that I should be warm and flushed."

"You are not dead," I said. "Angela, you are not dead. You are a living breathing woman. When you are dead you will be cold forever. Till then you must live."

She turned from me as I spoke. She stood with her back to me, her face to the wall, and her hair glistened darkly.

I snapped off the phonograph. The dance died sharply and a quick silence took its place. There was wild anticipation in my belly. I knew I had her then. I knew by the way she stood and would not look at me. Weeping may endure for a day, but Larakis cometh in the evening.

I reached for her and when she felt my hands she wantonly turned to meet me. I heard her breathing as if breathing were a punishment. Her eyes were closed and hollowed above her rouged cheeks and as I pulled her to me she opened them and they were frenzied and uncaring.

I kissed her full lips. My mouth hard upon her caught breath and the brazen scent of wine between us. The kiss broke and we shakenly drew breath and she stepped away for only a moment and then came back into my arms fiercely. I felt her fingers upon my face and on my throat and across my eyes. I quit goofing around. I started to pull her to the couch.

The buzzer rang a sharp shrill sound.

I felt her stiffen and I tried to catch my breath.

"We won't answer," I whispered. I caught her again. I reached for the great flowing hills of her breasts and felt them like fire beneath my hands.

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Somebody pounded on the door.

We looked at each other. Her face, pale and shaken, reflecting my own.

"We must answer," she said huskily. She stepped away pulling weakly at her dress.

If I had a gun in my hand at that moment I would have emptied it through the door without caring who it was. Instead I stumbled to it, cursing under my breath.

I flung it open and caught old Mantaris with his hand raised to pound again.

He looked startled and his mouth dropped open. The fierceness of my face must have scared blood out of him.

"What the hell do you want!" I roared.

He raised his hands in trembling defense. He stepped back and then looked around me quickly to where the Widow Angela stood. He spoke pleadingly to her watching me from the corner of his eye.

"Good evening, Mrs. Angela," he said and he reached down beside the door and brought up a large bag of groceries. "I am delivering your groceries."

I looked at him speechlessly. The Widow came closer to the door.

"Mr. Mantaris," she said, and her voice was still shaken. "I did not order any groceries."

The old man tried to look surprised and in his excitement and fear bounced up and down in the doorway.

"I was sure this was your order," he said. "Mrs. Angela, maybe you forgot about this order."

"Are you nuts?" I said, and a strange unrest bit at my belly. "She said she didn't order any groceries. Now get the hell away from here."

"Mike," the Widow Angela said reprovingly. She had regained her composure

"I am very sorry, Mr. Mantaris," she said quietly. "There has been a mistake. I did not order any groceries."

The old man stopped bouncing and the sweat crouched in little beads across his brown cheeks and forehead. "I am sorry. I am getting old," he said. "I became mixed up. Forgive me."

For the first time I looked at the bag of groceries. I almost choked. Right on the top as bold as you goddam please was a cabbage! That did it! I gave him a shove and slammed the door in his face.

I turned back to the Widow. I was confused but not discouraged. I had come so close I refused to believe I could not make up the lost ground. I went for her again.

She greeted me with her elbows and a tight dark face.

"Angela," I said. "My darling, don't turn me away."

She shook her head. She stood like a stranger in the room. "It was wrong," she said. "If that old man had not accidentally come at the moment he did, it would have been wrong."

I watched her moist lips move as she talked and remembered them soft under my own.

"You can't go to bed alone forever," I said harshly.

She shook her head and her eyes were deep and clear. "Not forever," she said. "When I find a man to love and marry who will love me, we will go to bed."

I heard her with the hearing of my ear and saw her with the seeing of my eye. There was a roaring beginning in my head and a sense of outrage in my loins. "You are crazy," I said.

"I was for a little while," she said. "I am all right now."

"I won't give you up," I said.

"I will not see you," she said.

"I will make you see me," I said.

"We can be friends," she said.

"Friends!" That word nearly strangled me.

Her face was set into hard firm lines. She wore her virtue like a coat of armor.

I had enough. A man's heart deviseth his way but the Lord directeth his steps. While I was missing from the couch, the fire burned out.

"Good-by," she said.

I stood there a moment. Nimrod, the mighty hunter, returning with an empty pouch.

"My hat and coat," I said haughtily.

She turned to get them and I took one last mournful look at her strong fine thighs and the slender turn of her trim ankles. She brought me back my things. She walked to the door and opened it. I walked past her and turned in the doorway standing in the same place that sneaky old bastard had stood a few moments before.

"Angela," I said. "You are doing us both wrong."

She turned and walked out of the room and left me in the doorway with the door still open. If she had at least closed the door or pushed me out, but she left me standing there with the door still open.

With what dignity I could muster I reached in and closed the door in my own face. I turned and walked down the stairs.

In the car I debated between throwing a rock through the window of the Mantaris grocery or going to Crotty's bar. I decided on the bar. If I hurried I knew a cigarette girl there that I might talk into taking the night off. She had a squeaky giggle and an unfortunate tendency to cold feet, but any port in a storm.

An ass is beautiful to an ass and a pig to a pig.

To hell with the Widow Angela.

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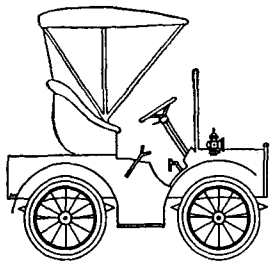
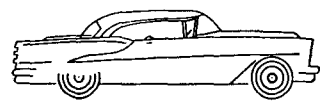
AMERICAN CARS



A Narrowing Choice



BY JOHN L. HESS

Despite extraordinary gains in the sale of small foreign cars in this country, Detroit still seems to doubt that this relatively new market is worth developing. But while the number of American manufacturers has been diminishing, more and more producers overseas are finding buyers here for an increasing variety of their models. JOHN L. HESS *is a New York journalist who specializes in business.*

THE passing away of the Hudson automobile line in its fiftieth year and of the Nash in its fortieth hardly caused a ripple. In a nation of motorists, nobody cared.

The announcement was made at the end of September at a closed meeting of American Motors dealers in Chicago. Apparently the Hudson and Nash nameplates had become a handicap; henceforth, American Motors' hopes would ride on the Rambler name. The company reported that the dealers were "wholly in accord" with the decision. Evidently the market was in accord too, for the following day American Motors stock went up 67½ cents a share to $7.

No doubt the step was good business and long overdue. As salesman Willy Loman might put it, the Nash and Hudson cars were liked, but not well liked. In the fiercely competitive automobile sales race, they finished last. In 1957, only 3561 Nashes and 1345 Hudsons were made — less than one tenth of one per cent of the industry's total. Obviously, something had to give.

But the passing of two more American car lines poses grave questions: Is there room in the automobile market for the variety and competition that have characterized it in past years? And is there still room in the automotive industry for the small company?

The term "small" is of course relative. In 1956, a bad year for them, sales of American Motors and Studebaker-Packard totaled nearly three quarters of a billion dollars, and their assets exceeded half a billion. Counting employees, dealers, and stockholders and their families, perhaps a million persons are more or less dependent on them. It has been suggested that the failure of either of the automotive "independents" would be the largest industrial collapse in history. Certainly they have been close to the brink. In the last four years, the two companies have lost something like two hundred million dollars.

The demise of the Hudson and Nash is, then, of interest to more than the antiquarian. Why did these two, of all the model lines offered in 1957, fare the worst? The experts of the consumer and technical magazines rated them more or less with the rest. And it becomes increasingly difficult to tell one make of car from another. And engineers and mechanics agree that there is not a decisive difference in quality or design between rival models in a given price range. Nor, generally, from one year to the next. As Harlow Curtice of General Motors has pointed out, Detroit never puts out a revolutionary new car.

If, then, the Nash and Hudson were reasonably equivalent in design and quality to their competitors, wherein did they fail? In price? Factory prices in the industry are fairly uniform, and the hard-pressed Nash and Hudson dealers always were ready to offer a better deal than anyone else. In cost of production? Not at all. The independents have far lower break-even points (the number

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of car sales it takes to cover overhead and start making a profit) than do General Motors, Ford, or Chrysler.

It is a myth that the bigger the company, the lower its costs. At some point of diminishing returns, the reverse becomes true. In recent years, the Big Three have learned, at some expense, that it is not always cheaper for a company to make all its own parts. Somehow the smaller company, lacking the capital, buying power, and huge research budget of the big one, but also lacking the vast overhead and sprawling bureaucracy, often is able to produce something better or cheaper or quicker. Management of the smaller concern is closer to the problems of production and marketing; the carrot of profit and the club of necessity are more intimate companions. Survival is always in question. A retired executive of a great electrical corporation writes in his autobiography that throughout his career, smaller competitors consistently produced more cheaply than his company could. Most of the competitors are gone, though. His company is bigger than ever.

If it was not in quality or price or efficiency that Hudson and Nash failed, where then? The reason most often mentioned in the trade is that an "off make," once it leaves the dealer's showroom and becomes a used car, depreciates in market value even faster than do the top-selling cars. Obviously many thousands of motorists who would just as soon buy a Hudson or Nash were deterred by this fact. But this begs the question. The car with fewer sales depreciates faster because it has fewer sales. But why so few sales in the first place?

Clearly, the great edge of the giant companies lies in their vast advertising budgets and marketing organizations — the standard brand, the slogan dinned into the subconscious. The car is not merely a vehicle, but a symbol of social and financial status; to drive a car that is a business failure is to suggest that one is not a success.

There is, further, the matter of margin for error. To a smaller company, a misjudgment of the market can be fatal. The giants can afford to make mistakes and their slips hardly show; General Motors lost a little ground in the 1957 car sales race but cleared more than three quarters of a billion dollars after taxes.

Ford says it has bet a quarter of a billion dollars that what the auto industry needs is another gaudy car in the medium-price range. (It spent a fortune on a survey to find the name with the most sex appeal, then threw out the result and christened the car Edsel.) Ford may be right but, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, its Mercury dealers are complaining that the Edsel is hurting them rather than its competitors. In any case, it cannot be said that competition is dead: the day after the Edsel appeared, its sister Ford model division splashed big newspaper ads reading "Why pay more?" Sales of Edsel in the early months have been crushingly disappointing. If Ford loses its quarter billion (deducting 52 per cent from income taxes), it will survive, while a lesser company would fall by the wayside.

By the same token, when a smaller company pioneers an automotive trend, it is unable fully to exploit it. Studebaker, the one-time carriage maker, has a long history of leadership in design and quality, yet it has suffered disastrous losses in the last four years, and its share of the market has slumped to one per cent.

Curiously, these losses are all that keep Studebaker-Packard going. Under the tax code, a company that is losing money takes its past losses with it if it merges with another corporation, and these losses may be deducted from future profits. Thus a deficit becomes an asset with a definite market value. Studebaker was on the verge of bankruptcy in 1956 when Curtiss-Wright bailed it out by buying the military segment of its business for $35 million. Curtiss also took effective control of the automobile company, and it is generally expected to merge with it in 1958, gaining a tax-loss credit that has been estimated at more than $150 million.

But to pick up a huge corporation in this way virtually for nothing will benefit Curtiss not at all if Studebaker continues to lose money at the pace of recent years. The cases of the Nash and Hudson and the Kaiser and Willys, not to mention the Studebaker and the Packard, would seem to demonstrate conclusively that any company will lose money that tries to fight the Big Three on their own ground. Yet Studebaker-Packard under the Curtiss management has stubbornly brought out a 1958 line that, like the rest of the industry's, is longer, lower, wider, and costlier. (The mind boggles at the thought of all those garage doors that were widened for the 1957s having to be done over again.)

To be sure, Studebaker has made one tentative step out of line with a stripped-down version of a standard car, which it calls the Scotsman. But its basic outlook apparently is still that of its former boss, the noted salesman James J. Nance. Now a Ford vice president, Mr. Nance said recently: "Our surveys have found . . . no evidence that the American public is interested in lowering its standard of living by buying an economy car on a large scale."

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In defense of recent style trends, Ford executives tell of a poll taken some years ago. As reported by the New York *Herald Tribune:*

> Two questions were asked: What kind of car do you want to buy? And what kind of car does your neighbor want to buy? The answer to the first most often pictured a car that was austerity itself — small, economical, with a minimum of chrome and only the necessary accessories. Answer to the second question, however, was just the opposite. The neighbor wanted a long, low "boat," with a lot of horses under the hood and every gadget made.
>
> Ford wisely produced the kind of car the "neighbor" wanted. The result, when the car was introduced some years later, was that Ford enjoyed its best year in history.

Whether the above is a parable or actually happened, Detroit certainly has been making the long, low boat that the neighbor wanted, and with more horses under the hood than he ever dreamed of — although it is not stressing that in its advertisements this year, pursuant to a highly publicized safety pledge made by the industry last spring.

And who can quarrel with success? In the 1957 sales race, Chrysler's high-tailed gee-whiz line was a standout. For the 1958 model-year, Chrysler is staying with its winner, while the others hasten to conform.

Yet one wonders whether, in this era of multi-million-dollar advertising budgets, the public taste creates the style trend, or vice versa.

The glittering prospect from Detroit's point of view is darkened by a cloud no larger than a Volkswagen. A frankly homely little car, without style, chrome, and advertising, its sales in the American market have soared from six hundred in 1952 to more than sixty thousand in 1957 and would have been much greater had the cars been available to meet the demand.

With the help of modest advertising budgets, sales of the somewhat more stylish British cars in this country have tripled in the past three years, to roughly seventy-five thousand. With similar promotion, the Renault has been fast overtaking the Volkswagen. Sales of all foreign cars doubled in 1957, to a total of about two hundred thousand. Sales of American cars have held below six million a year since reaching their high mark of seven and a half million in 1955.

The small-car boom has not, of course, gone unnoticed in the head offices of the Big Three. The prevailing reaction is one of skepticism, tinged with concern. Ford's vice president in charge of styling asserted in a speech recently in Los Angeles (where one dealer last October placed a $30 million order for British cars): "Automotive styling abroad is now at the point we reached twenty years ago." But the *Wall Street Journal* reports: "Ford Motor has called on the Institute of Motivational Research to find out why Americans buy foreign economy cars."

Pending so formidable a study, one may perhaps speculate on the reasons. The question is of sufficient importance to the economy to engage the attention of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, which reported in its October *Business Review* signs of "consumer disenchantment" with the neighbor's increasingly long, low, and impractical boat and doubts about the actual need for "more horsepower so we can go faster bumper to bumper."

"The biggest cars — once the symbol of wealth — are slowly being replaced with small sports cars," the bank said. "This is confusing to many consumers. Why move up to bigger cars when many 'tastemakers' are buying smaller ones?"

Aside from the field of hidden persuasion, the bank points out that car prices in the last decade have risen twice as fast as have prices in general. For a time, "easy" credit disguised the price increase, for by extending the period of repayment, sellers kept the monthly payments virtually unchanged. But this trend went just about as far as it could go in the feverish selling campaign of 1955. (A good many 1955s are not yet paid for.) Since then, price increases have registered on the monthly payments. The recent downturn in general business strengthens the view that the 1958 model-year may be a difficult one.

The price squeeze and traffic and parking conditions suggest that the potentialities of the small car have not yet been scratched. It is curious that no American company has yet tried to build a small but first-rate car; the first efforts in this field were mechanical fiascoes that set the trend back for many years.

American Motors, to be sure, scored a modest success with its in-between-size Rambler while it was plunging into the red with the Nash and Hudson. And sales of its British-built Metropolitan have been excellent. But it has been surprisingly reluctant to acknowledge the lesson. The Rambler has stretched and bulged in an effort to look like the big cars. The Volkswagen for a time passed it in popularity. It is only in this model-year that George Romney of American Motors has proclaimed the small car the car of the future, and has revived the 100-inch wheelbase.

The argument offered by Detroit executives is that it would cost too much to tool up for a small car, and that even then they could not compete with the lower wages paid by European manu-

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facturers. This seems a curious argument, coming from the birthplace of mass production; one is reluctant to believe that the American car industry with its vast resources and market cannot hold its own — with the protection of a 9.5 per cent tariff to boot.

It may be suggested that the great advantage of the Europeans is not low wages but the fact that they have never adopted the shibboleth of Detroit, the annual model changeover. This practice, sometimes called planned obsolescence, has not only added hundreds of millions of dollars a year to costs, but is also the mainspring of the relentless drive toward gaudier styling and wilder gadgetry.

Evidence that an American car company can make a profit on relatively small sales is provided by the humble Jeep. Its corporate sisters, the Kaiser, Frazer, Henry J, and Willys, tried to keep up with the pace of fashion and were dismal failures. The Jeep keeps rolling along. No changeover, no deficits.

To a fuddy-duddy who thinks a 1932 Buick was the best car he ever owned, there is special interest in the announcement that Checker plans to make a limited number of family cars in 1958, high, roomy, sensible ones, with hardly any chrome and no fixed annual changeover. Now that private cars have taken over the garish hues of the taxis, it seems only fair that the old-fashioned cab should take over the family garage.

A General Motors executive has said that sales of foreign cars would have to go up to 500,000 a year before his company would consider turning out an economy car. (Curiously, the British motor industry takes the same wait-and-see attitude with regard to the Continental "baby" or bubble cars, which are beginning to have a vogue.) Mr. Nance suggests that Ford may make its contribution to "a lower standard of living" if foreign car sales rise to 5 per cent of the market, which would be roughly 300,000 cars. It is not a daring prediction that Mr. Nance's resistance point will be breached in 1958.

Meanwhile, the British Ford is doing well in this country (third in sales of foreign cars, behind Volkswagen and Renault), and General Motors has begun to import its Vauxhalls from Britain and a specially designed Opel Rekord from its German subsidiary. Studebaker dealers are offering the Mercedes Benz at the upper end of the car spectrum and, at the lower end, a German baby car with the engagingly infantile name Goggomobil. Chrysler's executives have been touring Europe in search of competitive vehicles, and there have been rumors of a deal with Renault or of outright purchase of a line such as the British Standard.

The purpose here is not only to test the market for small cars and to make a few dollars, but to relieve the condition of dealers selling American cars in the medium-price range. A phenomenon of the 1957 market was the squeeze on these cars, exerted by the very companies that make them. With the low-price cars so high-priced, large, and gadget-packed, the incentive to "trade up" was reduced. And if one wanted a classier vehicle, the cheapest Cadillac, Lincoln, or Chrysler was not so very much higher than the costliest Chevrolet, Ford, or Plymouth. It was this situation that raised eyebrows in business circles when Ford brought out the Edsel.

Prior to 1956, a dealer was not as a rule permitted to sell new cars of any make other than the one for which he held the franchise. But in 1955, while car sales were hitting their all-time high, thousands of dealers failed; this brought on the Senate O'Mahoney inquiry into the pressures brought on dealers by car makers. Subsequently, the industry eased the franchise terms.

Dealers have since found that they often can make as much profit on an imported car selling in the $1400 to $1800 range as they can on an American car costing a thousand more. This is because the demand for foreign cars so far has exceeded the supply, and list prices therefore have held firm, while the cutthroat competition among dealers even in the same line of American cars has made heavy discounts and inflated trade-ins standard practice.

Foreign automobile companies privately concede that their happy days in the American market are too good to last. Perhaps within a year, almost certainly within two, one of the Big Three will take the plunge into the small-car field, and the others will follow virtually immediately. This will indeed cause a change — if not, as Mr. Nance puts it, a decline — in the American standard of living. At the same time, especially if the economy continues under pressure, one may expect a further shrinkage in the number of competing makes in what ultimately will become known as the large-car field.

Will the industry then narrow down to three producers (or even fewer), and will the choice of the motorist then continue to contract? No doubt, with their vast resources, the giant companies will dominate the small-car field, when they get around to it. But one must hope that flexibility and imagination will enable some of the smaller companies to stay on the road and maintain a healthy degree of variety rather than conformity on the highways.

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THE YEARS WITH ROSS

Photograph of James Thurber by Cecil Beaton

BY JAMES THURBER

Of all the innovations which Harold Ross devised when he first put together the NEW YORKER, *the department which he called "The Talk of the Town" was the most peculiarly his own. Under his ceaseless editorial drive it became a potent new style of journalism in which,* JAMES THURBER *tells us, the laugh discloses the fact or the fact creates the laugh. This is the fourth part of Mr. Thurber's series.*

ONE of the already well-established rituals aboard the *New Yorker* when I joined its jittery crew in the wayward weather of 1927 was what skipper Harold Ross, alternately dauntless ("Don't give up the ship!") and despairing ("We are lost, the captain shouted!") called the weekly Talk meeting. I survived hundreds of them — physically, at any rate. Named for "The Talk of the Town," the front-of-the-book department that was Ross's favorite and gloomiest preoccupation in the early years, the Wednesday morning meetings rambled on for anywhere from one to three hours, depending upon the mood of the master.

When Ross's secretary informed him that the rest of us — Katharine Angell, Andy White, Ralph Ingersoll, and I — were gathered around the table in the meeting room, Ross would saunter in, sometimes with the expression of a man who has heard an encouraging word but oftener with the worried brow of a bloodhound that is not only off the scent but is afraid it's losing its sense of smell. ("You're lousing up your metaphors," I can hear Ross grumbling. "Now you got a goddam bloodhound commanding a ship.") He would plop his brief case on the table, sit down, sigh darkly, and open the meeting with some pronouncement, either a small fact about a big man: "William Randolph Hearst still has all his teeth," or a derogatory comment about an institution: "Medical science doesn't even know how to cure dandruff," or a running broad jump to some despondent conclusion: "Maude Adams lives in town now, but I haven't got anybody that can find out what she does and where she goes and who she sees."

Then the regular order of business began with a safari through the darkest regions ("Now, by god, I'm Stanley!") of the X issue, the one that would reach the stands the following day. It never satisfied Ross, and it rarely put him in a good humor. There weren't enough laughs in Talk, or any interesting facts; two drawings in the issue were too much alike; and "White and Thurber both mentioned novocain in their casuals. We're getting neurotic."

There was always, tossed in somewhere, a brief lecture about something: the lack of journalistic sense in the female of our species, everybody's ignorance of the rules of grammar and syntax, the wasting talent of a certain artist who was making a career of sex, or the incompetence of some doctor who was treating a friend of Ross's. He affected a disdain for doctors and other professional men, and once when I introduced him to a great eye surgeon, he shook hands with him and said, "I have little respect for professional men." He actually had great respect for this particular doctor, and for

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several others, but his rude generalization was prompted by the little boy in him, or the partly educated adult envious of specialized training and skeptical of technical knowledge, or some orneriness of mood aggravated by the peptic ulcers that bothered him during the last thirty years of his life. Alexander Woollcott explained the ungracious phase of the fabulous editor in ten words: "Ross has the utmost contempt for anything he doesn't understand." But Dorothy Parker wrapped up all the Rosses in four words: "He's a professional lunatic."

Ross had a kind of mental file of prejudices and antipathies, some momentary, others permanent, and most of them of unrevealed origin. At one Talk meeting he scrawled on a memo pad "Hate Southerners," handed it to Ingersoll, and growled, "Keep bringing that up every week." It was brought up every week until Lois Long wrote a sharp satirical piece about a fictional Southern girl. Ross liked and admired many Southerners, among them Laurence Stallings and Nunnally ("Where I come from the Tobacco Road people are the country club set") Johnson. In 1926 Johnson had told Ross he would like to review motion pictures for the magazine. "For God's sake, why?" Ross demanded. "Movies are for old ladies and fairies. Write me some pieces." Ross had early conceived a violent dislike of movies, and hoped his cinema critic would have at them with a cudgel. His feeling was moderated somewhat after he saw *Public Enemy* and *Viva Villa*. On several visits to Hollywood he became a friend of James Cagney and Frank Capra, among others, and, a dozen of his letters prove, tried for years to interest Hollywood producers in my *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, whose film possibilities he was the first to detect.

Ross almost never got through a Talk meeting without contriving to make Ingersoll say something to irritate him. When Ingersoll suggested a dope piece about the enormous ball that surmounts the Paramount building, Ross glared at him and snarled, "I wouldn't print a piece about that ball if Lord Louis Mountbatten were living in it." On another Wednesday, when Ingersoll told him "I have the stuff you wanted on Thaw," Ross's eyes brightened darkly. Ingersoll always pronounced *Thaw* as if it were *Thor*, and Ross knew this, but he said, "I don't want a piece about Thor, or Mercury, or any of the other Greek gods." Ingersoll was the main target of his gripes, and I was next. "There isn't a single laugh in the Talk of the Town," he snapped one day, and I snapped back, "You say that every week," and he snarled, "Well there are even fewer this time." Ross was not Ross until he had churned the hour, any hour, into a froth of complaint and challenge, and this was part of the inexhaustible, propulsive force of the magazine. I took up the challenge about Maude Adams, and a few days later laid on his desk her private phone number and enough data on her goings and doings for two separate pieces in "Talk of the Town." Ross stared at the stuff as if it had been dug up by a little child, and all he said was, "Well, I'll be damned!" It was a long time before he accepted me as a dependable reporter, but I was used to this because I had had the same experience of trial by ordeal with three different city editors of newspapers.

Russell Maloney, who took over from me in 1935 the task of writing most of Talk, once wrote in the *Saturday Review* that Harold Ross regarded perfection as his personal property, like his hat or his watch. This observation could be carried further without straining its soundness. In the first few years of his magazine Ross sometimes had as many as three men, in separate offices, writing pieces for Talk, each one unaware of the competition of the others. Most of them "went out like matches in the wind of Ross's scorn," as Ralph Ingersoll once put it. When the editor of the *New Yorker* became convinced that writers did not possess the perfection that was rightfully coming to him, out they went. Even when he decided that a writer probably did have his perfection, he liked to believe the fellow would never come across with it. He always hoped he would find perfection lying on his desk when he came to work, but he was pretty sure there would be no such luck.

Fifteen years ago I brought him a sheaf of some miscellaneous writings by Peter De Vries, whom I had met in Chicago, where he was then editor of *Poetry*, and told Ross I had found a perfect *New Yorker* writer. He stared at the material glumly, and said, "I'll read it, but it won't be funny and it won't be well written." Two hours later he called me into his office. Hope had risen like a full moon and shone in his face. "How can I get DeVree on the phone?" he demanded, his enthusiasm touched with excitement. Not many days after that Ross and I had lunch at the Algonquin with Peter DeVree — the name had become wedged in Ross's mind as French, not Dutch, and he was sure the sibilant should go unsounded, as in *debris*, and he never got it straightened out. I had warned Pete, since I was a veteran of such first meetings, that Ross's opening question might go off in any direction, like an unguided missile. "Hi, DeVree," said Ross as they shook hands. "Could you do the Race Track department?" This was the kind of irrelevancy I had in mind, and Pete was prepared

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for it. "No," he said, "but I can imitate a wounded gorilla." He had once imitated a wounded gorilla on a radio program in Chicago. Ross glared at me, realizing I had briefed De Vries, and then his slow lasting grin spread over his face. "Well, don't imitate it around the office," he growled amiably. "The place is a zoo the way it is." Thirty years ago Ross would probably have opened up on De Vries with "Maybe you could run the magazine" or "Could you write the Talk department?"

Ross couldn't have described perfection, because his limited vocabulary got tangled up in his fluency ("I don't want you to think I'm not incoherent," he once rattled off to somebody in "21"), but he recognized it when he saw it. He handled White's invaluable contributions as if they were fine crystal, and once stuck this note in Andy's typewriter: "I am encouraged to go on." Surely no other editor has ever been lost and saved so often in the course of a working week. When his heart leaped up, it leaped a long way, because it started from so far down, and its commutings over the years from the depths to the heights made Ross a specialist in appreciation. In spite of preliminary ordeal, of which there was always plenty, it became a pleasure to write for a man whose praise was so warm and genuine when it came. Dozens of us cherish old memos from him, and letters, and the memory of phone calls, and it is surprising how quickly they come to mind. I often remember a single sentence he scribbled and sent to me about one of the drawings I had done, illustrating Leigh Hunt's "The Glove and the Lions." It read, "It's the goddamdest lion fight ever put down on paper." But this is about the "Talk of the Town," of whose significant figures White was perhaps the most important, because of his superb handling of the first, or editorial, page of that department.

Elwyn Brooks White, who had been God's gift to the Cornell *Sun* and to that university's English professors, gentlemen used to perfection in books but not in classroom themes, was getting $30 a week writing automobile advertising in New York when Ross's magazine began. He sold Ross his first piece two months later, and then half a dozen light verses and some more "oddities," as he calls them. He did not meet Ross until after he was hired by Katharine Angell in the fall of 1926. I might as well admit, right here, that I have done a lot of brooding about the mystery that some literary scholars have wrought out of, to quote one of them, the central paradox of Harold Ross's nature; that is, his magic gift of surrounding himself with some of the best talent in America, despite his own literary and artistic limitations. Without detracting from his greatness as an editor, it must be pointed out that the very nature of his magazine, formless and haphazard though it was to begin with, did most of the attracting. Writers and artists of the kind Ross was looking for decided that here was a market for their wares, and to say that the head of such an enterprise, personally unknown to most of those who came to work for him, was the attracting force is to say that the candle, and not the flame, attracts the moths. I think the moths deserve most of the credit for discovering the flame.

White "brought the steel and music to the magazine," according to Marc Connelly, famous among his colleagues for such offhand lyrical flights. Others, White among them, have not been quite so definite about what it was that the *New Yorker's* "number one wheel horse" (Ingersoll's phrase) brought to the magazine from Cornell by way of the advertising business. In 1926 White began working part time for the *New Yorker* at $30 a week. "I hung on to my advertising connection because I had no confidence in my ability in the world of letters," White has written me. "Nothing that has happened in the last thirty years has shaken my lack of confidence — which is why I still hang on to newsbreaks." Nobody else in the world of letters shares White's lack of confidence in White.

Andy quickly cured one of Ross's early persistent headaches, caused by the problem of newsbreaks, those garbled and often hilarious items from American journals and magazines which conveniently fill out, or "justify," *New Yorker* columns. For more than thirty years White has written the taglines for these slips of the linotype machine, and some 30,000 of them have brightened the *New Yorker's* pages. Nobody else, and many have tried, ever caught the difficult knack of writing the tags, or inventing the various newsbreak categories such as "Raised Eyebrows Department," "Neatest Trick of the Week," and a score of others. My one contribution to the categories was "How's That Again? Department," but I was baffled by the task of writing taglines.

Once when White was on vacation I tried my hand at it, and it turned out to have five thumbs. I invented a phony newsbreak, to see if I could get it past Ross. The item, which I credited to a mythical newspaper, went like this: "Oswego, New York, birthplace of William Tecumseh Sherman, has no monument or other memorial to the great Civil War general." Under this I had written, "Oswego marching through Georgia?" It got into the magazine, since the checking department has never bothered to question the

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authenticity of newsbreaks. Sherman, of course, was born in Ohio, and this fact flickered into flame in the back of Ross's mind when the issue containing the fake break came out. Then he checked the newspaper and found out I had made it up. He banged into my office crying, "Goddam it, Thurber, don't kid around with the newsbreaks."

It would be like hunting for a broken needle in a hayfield to try to find a given newsbreak published long ago, and I doubt that even Miss Ebba Jonsson, the *New Yorker's* incomparable librarian, could locate my own favorite newsbreak in the roughly 1700 issues of the weekly that have been published so far. Fortunately it was printed in 1931 in a little book of *New Yorker* newsbreaks, called *Ho Hum*, with a foreword by White and drawings by Soglow. It goes like this:

> The Departure of Clara Adams
> [From the Burbank (Cal.) Post]
>
> Among the first to enter was Mrs. Clara Adams of Tannersville, Pa., lone woman passenger. Slowly her nose was turned around to face in a southwesterly direction, and away from the hangar doors. Then, like some strange beast, she crawled along the grass.

Ross had been in the habit of peddling the newsbreaks around the office, letting everybody try his hand at writing lines of comment to round them out. White turned in his first batch one day in the fall of 1926, and then went out to his parents' home in Mount Vernon, New York, where he came down with chicken pox. Ross instantly knew he had found the one and only man who could handle newsbreaks perfectly, and he got White on the phone in Mount Vernon. "I had never heard such a loud voice over any telephone," White wrote me, "and I had never been encouraged before by an employer, so it was a memorable occasion. Then Ross asked me to come right back into the office and I had to tell him I had chicken pox. 'You have *what?*' bellowed Ross." It was one of those innumberable petty irritations that bedeviled him in his early life as an editor. He just couldn't believe that he had at last found someone who was willing to endure the boredom and triviality and fine print of newsbreaks — and then this man had contracted a child's disease. It was the kind of experience that used to make him bang his hand on the table and scream, "That's my life!"

The handling of newsbreaks, White and Ross soon found, had its special perplexities, of the kind that made the editor nervous: a couple, instead of a coupé, found in a ditch; a hippy in place of a happy bride; a ship's captain who collapsed on the bride, instead of the bridge during a storm at sea; and a certain percentage of items skillfully counterfeited. There were also a few fanatics who made a hobby, or even a lifework, out of reading newspapers and sending in breaks, and most of them were touchy and temperamental. One of these career men wrote, "Do not put paper clips on my rejections. They leave marks." This complaint happened to Andy on a gloomy day. He poured Glyco-Thymoline on the breaks, instead of putting clips on them, and a few days later showed me a letter from the newsbreaker, thanking him for his care. "That's *my* life," said White.

White's "Notes and Comment," the first page of the "Talk of the Town," through the years has left its firm and graceful imprint on American letters, and every now and then has exerted its influence upon local, or even wider, affairs. It was responsible for the moving of the information booth in the Pennsylvania Station out into the center of the main floor; for the changing of the lights, from colored to white, in the tower of the Empire State Building; and for directing attention to the captive audiences in Grand Central Station, where passengers had been forced to listen to broadcast commercials. This practice was officially abandoned after hearings by the Public Service Commission, at one of which Harold Ross, on the stand, proudly described himself as "editor of an adult humor magazine." The editor made few public appearances in his lifetime, but this was one of his finest hours, and he enjoyed every minute of it. It was White, though, who had inaugurated the campaign to free the captives of commercialism.

"Notes and Comment," called simply "Comment," did more than anything else to set the tone and cadence of the *New Yorker* and to shape its turns of thought, and White's skill in bringing this page to the kind of perfection Ross had dreamed of intensified Ross's determination to make Talk the outstanding department of the magazine. It was a great help when God sent him an efficient and tireless young reporter named Charles H. Cooke, the magazine's first "Our Mr. Stanley," who was often up at dawn and abroad at midnight, digging up data.

The prospectus had declared, "*The New Yorker* will be what is commonly called sophisticated, in that it will assume a reasonable degree of enlightenment on the part of its readers." Ross found it hard to keep in mind this assumption of enlightenment, and sometimes seemed to be editing Talk for a little boy or an old lady whose faculties were dimming. When I used *axe-haft*, Ross followed it, in parentheses, with "the haft is the handle of the axe." His profound uneasiness in the presence of

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anything smacking of scholarship or specialized knowledge is perpetuated in dozens of small changes he made in my copy. In the following excerpt from a Talk piece, which I wrote after a visit to the Metropolitan Museum, I have italicized his insertions: "For those who exclaim over armor, *a thing pretty rare with us*, the three new suits the museum has just come by will prove enthralling. One of them, a richly ornamented Spanish war harness, has more pieces of réchange, *or you might say accessories*, than any other battle suit in the world. . . . Among other prizes of the New Accession Room is the lid of an amphora, *but we never did find out what an amphora is*." In another Talk item about the demands upon his hosts of the difficult and imperious Count Keyserling, I wrote that he had to have, around midnight, after his lecture, "champagne or claret," and Ross had to explain to his sophisticated readers that claret was "French red wine," so they would not confuse it with its prize-ring meaning of "blood."

Harold Wallace Ross, who secretly enjoyed being thought of as raconteur and man about town, was scared to death of being mistaken for a connoisseur, or an aesthete, or a scholar, and his heavy ingenuous Colorado hand was often laid violently upon anything that struck him as "intellectual." Thus his avid mental curiosity balked at anything that seemed to him redolent of learning. I find I once wrote of him in a letter to White, "What are you going to do about a man who would rather listen to Jim Farley discuss Coca-Cola than to Robert Frost describing rings of lantern light?"

Ross had the enthusiasm of a youngster at a circus for a thousand different things, but none of them was in the realm of the recondite or the academic. One day, a year before he died, I brought him together at the Algonquin with an old friend of mine who had never met him but had always been eager to find out what he was like. Ross launched immediately into a breathless discussion of his enthusiasm of the moment, the history of Bull Durham tobacco. My friend sat entranced for a quarter of an hour and, after Ross had departed, exclaimed, "He's a Gee Whiz guy!" Ross was fascinated by facts and statistics about the big and the costly, but he didn't like his facts bare and stark; he wanted them accompanied by comedy — you unwrapped the laugh and there was the fact, or maybe vice versa.

The Gee Whiz Guy was forever enchanted by the size and saga of the fabulous city's great buildings. He had long wanted a profile on Jacob Volk, a building wrecker out of Herculean mythology, who tore down two hundred and fifty big structures in Manhattan during his lifetime and never passed the Woolworth Building but what he dreamed of the joys of razing it. I had wanted the piece for Talk, where it seemed to me it belonged, but Ross assigned Robert Coates to do the profile. (Ross also took Shipwreck Kelley, the flagpole sitter, away from me and profiled him. These enlargements into profiles of snapshots that belonged in Talk marked the beginning of Ross's interest in long pieces instead of sharp vignettes.) I got Jake Volk for Talk, in spite of Ross, because the famous wrecker died while the Coates profile was in the works, and we never wrote profiles about dead men. I broke the sad news to the editor. "Damn it," mourned Ross, "why couldn't he have waited a week?" Ross believed that God and nature owed the *New Yorker* a reasonable amount of consideration in the matter of life and death. We laid Jake Volk to rest in "Talk of the Town," which dealt with the dead as well as the quick.

He had died two months before another wrecker began taking down the old Waldorf, on whose site the Empire State Building was erected. The original Waldorf was a toughly constructed building, and the wrecker who took it apart was paid $900,000 for the job — old Jake had paid for the privilege of tearing structures down, and made his profit by selling intact sections, but the debris of the Waldorf was all taken out to sea and dumped. I wrote about the last day of the famous hotel, and eighteen months later climbed the still unfinished tower of the Empire State.

Jake shook his head at mention of Stanford White. "When he built 'em they stayed built," he would say sadly. One that stayed built has just been made over into apartments for fifteen or twenty families. It's the great Italian Renaissance mansion in East 73rd Street where Joseph Pulitzer spent his last years and died without ever having been in forty-five of its sixty rooms. My bones still feel the cold of the mansion's deserted sprawl of rooms and halls littered with trash and covered with dust when I shivered in them one wintry day in 1934. The legends of Pulitzer and Stanford White are growing dim, but the famous mansion is as staunch as ever. I trust that the ghost of Jacob Volk, seeming to munch one of the caviar sandwiches he so loved, does not mournfully stalk the corridors of the old mansion just off Fifth Avenue.

In Columbus, or in France, or for the *Evening Post*, I had interviewed many celebrities: Eddie Rickenbacker, who had little to say; General Pershing, who had nothing to say; Harry Sinclair, who mumbled tonelessly; Thomas A. Edison, who kept repeating, "The radio will always distort the soprano voice." Interviews for the "Talk of the Town" were easier, because most of the char-

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acters of that period were colorful and voluble: Jimmy Walker, always eager to say something; Al Smith, a born speaker; Huey Long, who paced the four rooms of his hotel suite delivering a political speech for an hour to an audience that consisted of me; Jack Johnson, who talked about himself in the third person — "Jack Johnson don't approve of the immorality of the Broadway theater." If the principal celebrities of the time were to be seeded, like tennis players, on the basis of number of mentions each got in Talk, the listing of the first seven would go like this: Jimmy Walker 63, Al Smith 60, Calvin Coolidge 43, Lindbergh 33, J. P. Morgan 29, Gene Tunney 25, Otto Kahn 21. Ross once tacked an order on the bulletin board which read: "Otto Kahn has been mentioned six times in Talk recently. There will be no more mentions of him for six months." Ross was sternly opposed to anecdotes about the Algonquin group, and when an excellent one required the use of the name Alexander Woollcott, he cursed awhile and said, "I'll tell you what we'll do — we'll misspell it," and we left out one of the "l's." He worried about overmention of others, too: Admiral Byrd, Rudy Vallee, Grover Whalen, and Fiorello La Guardia.

Harold Ross, ever hot for certainties in this our life, was also, being a true newspaperman, avid of exclusive stories for Talk. It wasn't easy, though, to get them, because of the danger of their being leaked out between press time and publication day. Once we broke to the world the news of the vast Rockefeller Center project, only to find that the world knew all about it. Alva Johnston had written it up in a Sunday newspaper article before we hit the stands. We did manage what I called in my lead "A little miracle of secrecy" in reporting the first meeting of Gene Tunney and Charles A. Lindbergh, which took place at the studio of the artist Charles Baskerville in 1928. Ross and Tunney had become friends during the *Stars and Stripes* days in France. Ross got a great kick out of making me believe for a time, after the Tunney-Lindbergh story, that I had been hoaxed and that no such meeting had taken place — he himself had been out of town when I wrote the piece. But Gene Tunney has recently verified the old meeting in a letter to me, which he ended with, "Hal Ross was a great American," and Mr. Baskerville, riffling through the years, recently found a photograph of himself and Tunney and Lindbergh taken that day at his studio.

Every press agent in town dreamed of getting into Talk by throwing his fast ball past Ross (one day a story reached my desk about a cockroach race at the Nut Club in Greenwich Village) but Ross was struck out only once, by, of all people, Texas Guinan. She telephoned him one day to say, in a fine imitation of breathless excitement, that Ella Wendel, last of the three wealthy Wendel sisters, who lived in the gaslit past in a mysterious Fifth Avenue mansion, had visited her night club, accompanied by two elderly gentlemen out of the carriage days of old Gotham. "She talked to me about it for half an hour," Ross told me. I stared at the wise old newspaperman in disbelief. "She talks to everybody for half an hour on the phone," I told him. "She talked to me for half an hour one day when I was on the *Post*." Ross then went on to say that a few days after Miss Ella's visit Tex had received from her an elegant specially-made handbag worth $4500, to replace one given her by Frank Fay, which she had lost. "You can't believe that!" I yelled. "It's obviously a phony. Ask any woman you know, ask any little girl." But Ross ordered me to write the story — I told him he would have to make it an order — and it was printed, and Miss Wendel's attorneys called on Ross and demanded a retraction of the story. H. W. Ross gave up hard. He sent out three different reporters to call on every handbag maker in the East, and they all came back with the word that he had been royally humbugged.

One of the clearest pictures in my mental memory book of the old days is that of Ross pounding away on his typewriter, trying, by speed and finger power, to get facility and felicity into his rewriting of Talk. "It should be like dinner-table conversation," he used to repeat, but although he could be an entertaining dinner-table conversationalist, he was unable to hammer it into written prose. This was because he became an unreal Ross when he tried writing for the magazine, a strained and artificial personality, completely different from the undisguised and articulate one that still breathes in almost every line of the thousands of personal letters he wrote. He simply was not a *New Yorker* writer, never got better at it, and in the thirties gave it up, although he persisted in sticking into my copy now and then such pet expressions of his as "and such" and "otherwhere." His "and such" spots old "Talk of the Town" pieces like flyspecks. It was his idea of achieving ease. In one story, "The studio walls are hung with oils and watercolors, with here and there a gouache and silverpoint" became "The studio walls are hung with oils and watercolors, and such." His sense of rhythm, often orally effective, failed him on the typed page.

Sometimes I secretly rewrote his clumsier rewrites of my Talk pieces and faked his "R," which every piece of copy had to bear when it

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went to the printers. He was capable of awkward sentences that would have made him bellow if he had found them in someone else's copy; such a prize monstrosity, for instance, as "A man in a brown suit named Jones came into the room." Once he hastily changed "colloid" to "collide," and I sent him a note of reproof and told him to look up the word in the dictionary. He did and wrote back "It's a hell of a complicated world." Our clashes over Talk, frequent and lengthy in the beginning, gradually quieted down with his increasing interest in other departments of the magazine. But the late twenties were full of scraps between us. When, as something of an expert on the haunts of O. Henry in his beloved Baghdad-on-the-Subway, I wrote that he had last lived at the Hotel Caledonia, 28 West 26th Street, Ross yelled that I was wrong. F.P.A. had told him that it was the Hotel Chelsea, and to Ross the great Frank Adams was infallible. He sent a reporter to City Hall to check the vital statistics on Porter, William Sidney, and then slouched into my room to say grudgingly, "Okay on the Caledonia, Thurber," not so much pleased that I had been right as sorry that Adams had been wrong. If I was a man who lost things, and he was sure I was, he couldn't understand how the hell I could get facts straight.

The harassed editor, always beset by anxieties, worried about the rigor mortis of formula in "Talk of the Town" style, the repetition of "a gentleman of our acquaintance," "a man we know," "a Park Avenue lady," and such. Anecdotes, of which we have printed thousands, many of them flat, some of them memorable, were like mosquitoes that pestered him continually. "Nobody in this whole goddam city seems to say anything funny except taxi drivers, children, and colored maids." "We get too damn many about telephones and Macy's." And he would stick up a notice on the bulletin board beseeching everybody to turn in some fresh anecdotes. Once he paced for days, off and on, wondering what to do about a story my brother had sent in from Columbus, Ohio, dealing with Calvin Coolidge. It seemed that Mr. Coolidge had lost a nightgown in a Pullman sleeper and had written the company asking that it be returned or that he be reimbursed for its loss. This one never did reach print, because Ross could not figure out how to "hang it," that is, how to account for our knowing about a fact that had originated in the Near Far West.

With rue my heart is laden for one anecdote printed in Talk. It reported an incident that occurred during a convention of monumentalists, or tombstone cutters, in White Plains. A local member of the craft had shown off his own handiwork during a tour of a cemetery with a visiting headstonist. As they left the cemetery, a whistling boy walked past them. "Son of that big granite job I showed you back there," said the White Plains man. Ross loved it and ruined it with his rewrite. He not only dragged Rotary into it, for no good reason, but tinkered clumsily with the pay-off line, so that it came out: "Son of that big granite and iron job I showed you back there." Ross had turned a deaf ear to the speech and, for all I know, may also have found out that there is always some ironwork in a granite monument.

When another superior anecdote was sent in — it is still known around the office to old-timers as the "grison anecdote" — I rewrote it and commanded Ross not to touch a single word. He read it, brought it into my office, said it was swell, looked as sad as if he had just lost a friend, and said, "Can't I please put a comma after 'My God'?" That comma, the record shows, is there. Here is the grison anecdote:

> The Harold Wilcoxes, of Nutley, New Jersey, have a grison, which they keep in a cage on their porch. A grison is a very odd-looking South American weasel-like carnivore. The other day a house-to-house salesman for a certain brand of dainty soap rang the bell (without noticing the grison) and Mrs. Wilcox answered. He launched right into his well-rehearsed praises of the soap, in the course of which he finally did see the grison. He blanched, but kept right on: "It preserves the fine texture of the most delicate skin and lends a lasting and radiant rosiness to the complexion my God, what *is* that thing?"

One day in 1931 H. W. Ross came into my office to say, after a lot of silent pacing, "Are we *important?*" The voice was not that of the man who had kept repeating a year before, "We're getting *grim.*" I didn't encourage his implied ambition for higher things and longer pieces, but said, "We're just a fifteen-cent magazine." He left the room without saying anything, but half an hour later stuck his head in my door again. "I don't think so," he said, and went away.

The Talk meetings grew wearisome in the end and ran down like an old clock and stopped. "Thurber and White are sulky or surly or silent," Ross once told somebody, "and we're not getting anywhere." Once, at meeting's end Ross said to me, "Have you got anything else to bring up, Thurber?" and I said I had, and I brought it up, and it turned out the others had just been discussing it. "Thurber is the greatest unlistener I know," Ross later complained. Then there was the day, very near the end, when I wrote doggerel during a meeting and shoved it across to White.

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Ross had figured I was making notes on something he had said, but the thing got into the magazine, I can't remember why, and there it is in the files, entitled "Bachelor Burton." It runs like this:

> Elwyn Lewis Brooksy Burton
> Went to buy himself a curtain,
> Called on Greenburg, Moe and Mintz,
> Bought a hundred yards of chintz
> Stamped with owls and all star-spangled,
> Tried to hang it, fell, and strangled.

I think it held no conscious symbolism, and if I read any into it now, it would just be the creaky invention of a rusty memory.

My eight years of wandering the city for Talk ended in 1935, and my last visit piece was about a melancholy stroll along 14th Street a few days before Christmas that year. It ends like this: "We missed this year the vendors of those old-fashioned German Christmas cards with the tinsel snow and the rich colors. There used to be several of them around, and a sad man who played 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' on a flute. Nobody seemed to know what had become of them." Most of the personalities of the Crazy Years between Lindbergh's flight and Hitler's heyday are dead and gone, and I had forgotten most of the tinsel snow and the colorful trivialities I gathered for the "Talk of the Town" so long ago until I looked them up in the files the other day. There was a lot of stuff to hold the interest of the Gee Whiz Guy: Ely Culbertson pondering for forty-three minutes before playing a certain card in his celebrated bridge match with Sidney Lenz; the signature of Count Felix von Luckner, fourteen inches long and two inches high, in an enormous guest book; and an item about the thirty-six-ton meteorite that Admiral Peary brought back from Greenland and presented to the Museum of Natural History. "Geezus!" said Ross. "I hope they were expecting it."

Ross gradually lost his high interest in "Talk of the Town," but the best of it, carefully selected, would be a valuable record of the Wonderful Town in the bizarre second quarter of this century. In 1950 I wanted to write for Talk two or three pieces about Houdini, but Ross wrote me that he didn't want to "fritter Houdini away on Talk of the Town." This was the epitaph for the old journalistic department as I had known it. Four years earlier he had written me a letter that clearly reveals the dying of an old passion of his. It begins "Dear Jim." (Ross rarely called men by their first names in talking to them in the office, but he often used first names in letters, and at social gatherings at his apartment, and otherwhere. Like me, both White and Gibbs were always a little surprised by the intimate salutation, and once Gibbs was disturbed. He had been in the hospital for several weeks, and Ross had visited him there. "I was about to have a third of my right lung taken out," Gibbs has written me, "and, as I know now, without a very good chance of surviving the operation. He came to see me the afternoon before they were going to work on me, and he called me Wolcott, pronouncing it almost right, and I swear to God it was the first time it really occurred to me that I might be going to die. I called him Harold back, but it was quite an effort in my condition.") Here is the Ross letter, dated November 12, 1946:

> The fault with Talk is mainly ideas. When you were doing the rewrite, we were getting better ideas. Shawn (peerless as an idea man) was on the job, and if I do say it myself, I was sparking some too. I was younger then. I've been very uneasy about the idea end of Talk for some time, now that the war is over and things aren't so obvious. I look over the ideas every week and am discouraged. If you should know of a man who can spark ideas, there's a job open for him, God knows.
>
> It isn't true that there are many reporters. At the moment, we are weak there, too, unless two or three absolutely new men should develop a flair, like Charles Cooke's (he also was peerless). We've had a couple of very good girls, but one got married and left town, and the other has gone on to working on longer pieces. We use reporters on long pieces more than we used to, but no more on Talk, I think, except for people trying out. We're trying to find young talent of all kinds and it's hard. And as to the writing, no one writer is making it a principal interest now, and I think that makes a difference. All the boys are doing Talk along with other things. Give me you, Shawn, and Cooke and I'll get out a Talk department. . . . It's up to God to send some young talent around this place, and He's been neglecting the job. That's the trouble.

When Ross wrote that, Bill Shawn, now editor of the *New Yorker*, was top man on the totem pole and remained there the rest of Ross's life, thus setting a world's endurance record. It was characteristic of H. W. Ross to forget that the two idea men in my day were Ralph Ingersoll and Bernard A. Bergman, who were never excelled, that Russel Crouse and Bob Coates had been two of the earliest and ablest Talk writers, and that the remarkable Haidee Eames Yates had been one of the first and liveliest reporters. Once, thirty years ago, I incorporated a line of her notes intact in one of my rewrites and sent it on to Ross. It was about a certain colorful celebrity and reported simply: "His love life seems as mixed up as a dog's breakfast." Ross blue-penciled it, of course, but the phrase remained a part of office lingo. And here, weary reader, let us leave them all.

Next month: The goddam drawings.

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A lawyer who has taken a leading responsibility in business management, a citizen who is public-spirited and courageous in the contributions he has made to his home community, LELAND HAZARD *has been vice president and general counsel of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company since 1947.*

INFLATION AND STRIKES

BY LELAND HAZARD

THE future of capitalism may very well depend upon improvement in the quality of the labor-management relationship. This becomes more and more apparent as we observe the disturbing progress of inflation.

Of course the memories of the deflationary early 1930s linger. For psychological reasons we can have a chilly wind in our economy almost any time, in fact in the very month in which the reader attends this article. But the underlying factors — population growth, a people conditioned to ever-rising standards of living, and strong unions — these factors tend toward inflation. The grave question is: Who is the villain responsible for spreading the inflationary disease?

Is it management; labor? Is it wages, profits, the income tax, the interest rate, Wall Street, Main Street? The truth is that nobody knows beyond all doubt, and therefore the field is wide open for accusations.

But when people feel threatened, they do not wait for proof. They *decide*. A recent poll of the Gallup type found 89 per cent of the American people saying that prices have been going up and 85 per cent saying that we do have inflation now. The poll found inflation the first of twenty domestic problems which people thought Congress should consider, and showed that in the people's view government, big business, and labor unions shared the blame nearly equally — within a mere four percentage points.

The underdog has disappeared from our midst. Phrases such as "exploitation of labor" are gone from our vocabulary. Practices in capitalism which made a Robert Owen and other Utopians of the nineteenth century possible, even a Norman Thomas of the twentieth century, are gone. Minimum wages, retirement pensions, health and accident insurance, unemployment compensation — through these we have all but created the risk-less society, except for the risk of inflation. Labor can no longer sound the howl of the underdog.

And even though the man on the street may not care about, or be much influenced by, the statistics which prove that for some years wages have been increasing more rapidly than profits, in any case he finds the erstwhile underprivileged tugging less insistently on his heartstrings. The forests of television aerials all over America hearten the average man. And the difficulty of finding a parking place leaves him with the conviction that not all of those cars can belong to the wicked rich.

But nowadays Americans worry about whether our system can last. People who care about haircuts have — more often than not — the required $1.75. But they are rightly concerned about any price which has moved upward so much, so fast, in such a short time. Where will it end, people want to know?

Prices rise 1) when goods which people need or wish are in short supply, so that people are bidding against one another for the less than sufficient quantity, or 2) when the supply of money (mostly bank credit) is ample or excessive so that money is pressing to rent itself, and therefore capital is abundant for all kinds of new and risky ventures. These classic causes of inflation do not seem prominent enough today to explain what is happening to prices. By and large, goods are plentiful. A person can get an automobile or refrigerator without waiting, as everybody knows. Less widely understood, but equally significant, is the fact that the board of governors of the Federal Reserve System has been consistently and effectively re-

Photo from THE NEW LANDSCAPE *by Gyorgy Kepes*

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stricting the supply of money, that is, the supply of bank credit. Therefore two of the classic causes of inflation are absent from the scene. There is no shortage of goods and there is no excessive supply of money. And yet we have inflation.

From all of this a new term has emerged — wage inflation. Higher wages, higher prices. The circle is vicious. Management says to labor, keep the wage down and we can keep the price down; put the wage up and we have to put the price up, so that your wage increase does you no good and does harm to schoolteachers, some farmers, government workers, pensioners, and others (including savers) who have little power to force their incomes upward to match the higher prices. Labor retorts that the cost of living keeps going up, that labor must run faster to stay where it is, and that management does not indeed need to increase its prices. At this point in the argument labor points to high profits, usually quoting absolute figures in impressive millions, seldom relative figures. The fact is that the margin of profit for all business, particularly big business, is presently declining.

In management circles it is widely held that unions should restrain themselves and refrain from higher wage demands. According to the polls, a surprising percentage of the people are also coming to that conclusion. But I do not expect relief from labor. Union leaders, even the more responsible ones, are necessarily political. Workers' demands are varied and disparate; inter-union rivalries still exist, despite the merger of the AFL and the CIO. Employment is relatively full. Labor is actually short in some areas. These are not the conditions under which a realist expects unions to withhold wage demands.

And so I make the first of two proposals: I think that we in management must begin now to refuse wage increases even though we know certainly that our refusals will produce strikes. We have been too timid about strikes. During World War II we were highly conditioned against them. Production of munitions was so much needed; almost every significant manufacturer had converted to some form of war production; and any interruption of production could have threatened our national survival.

Furthermore, the conditioning continued into the post-war period. Flush with the money of wartime payrolls, our country needed goods to supply the enormous demand accumulated during wartime restraints. After the war we could have had an inflation to curl your hair, except for the amazing speed of industrial reconversion and a relatively high degree of industrial peace.

But now we are in a new day. Nevertheless labor has got the habit of asking wage increases and management has got the habit of granting them and passing on the cost by increasing prices. The case is not unlike that of the victim who originally suffers real pain, takes a drug of sufficient potency to alleviate the pain, then ultimately imagines the pain so that he may have the drug.

Of course management can exhort labor not to ask for the next wage increase, warning against inflation, and of course labor can exhort management to grant the next wage increase and pay it out of profits rather than by higher prices, pointing to the high cost of living — both sounding unctuously pious. But the fact is that management *does* have the power to say no.

Powerful influences work to coerce management to say yes: not only the conditioning mentioned above but also the general stigma which attends a strike. The manufacturer may be a supplier to another manufacturer, so that interruption of supply closes the customer's plant — an event which may well cause that customer to change his source of supply; or a manufacturer may hesitate to risk a strike which will take his brand name off the shelves while a competitor's brand name is in ample supply. Management has many good reasons for yielding to wage demands when a strike is the alternative. But management has the power to say no. Does it in present circumstances have a duty to say no? I think it does.

In the United States, wage setting is left by law (the Wagner Act of 1935) to collective bargaining between management and labor. In some other countries government fixes wages. In America management values very highly this freedom from governmental intervention in the wage-setting process. So does labor. But are we using our freedom?

Management has more independence than does union leadership. It is relatively free of political considerations and should begin now to exercise its greater power to say no, lest government under political pressure resulting from the people's fear of inflation should blunder into the process of setting wages and prices.

The price of "no" to further wage increases will be some strikes. It is said that no one wins a strike, but this cliché is only partly true. A strike which lasts long enough (I consider six weeks a minimum) has a considerable and favorable effect for a long time. It hurts enough to be remembered. It has a sobering influence. The fact that a strike has occurred is one of the best reasons why it will not be necessary again — not soon.

Strikes of themselves will not necessarily curb inflation. But if management has the wit to make the issue clear — that the hurt of the strike is

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inflicted in the sober conviction that the American system is in jeopardy — a great advance can be made in our economic understanding. People learn what they need to learn. And crisis and drama are great aids to learning.

We are now confronted by a dilemma with three horns rather than the conventional two. Labor is unlikely to refrain from wage demands while prices (cost of living) continue to rise. Management is unlikely to deny wage demands so long as the higher wages can be passed along in higher prices. Here are two horns of the dilemma.

The third is politics. Government has the power to enlarge or contract the money supply — the amount of bank credit. If the dollar is to be really sound, the Federal Reserve Board must contract the money supply severely. It must up the terms for credit and confidence sharply. Then goods at the higher prices necessary to recover the last wage increase will not move. Inventories will increase. Manufacturers will begin closing plants, and marginal enterprises will fail. The result will be people out of work.

So there we have it — a three-horned dilemma. If management says no — and management should say no — there will be strikes and, worse, perhaps the loss of customers not willing to suffer for the good of the economy as a whole. If labor leaders refrain from more wage demands, who will guarantee them that the cost of living will stand still or that other labor leaders will not raid their unhappy unions? And if government yanks the credit rug from underneath higher prices, they will fall all right, but too many voters will walk hard pavements, unemployed and quite uninterested in the hardened dollar. Everybody fears inflation but no one will do anything about it. We know how. Indeed we understand the remedies and their consequences all too well.

Productivity is the one technically possible escape from the three horns of the dilemma. But I mention productivity only to admit that our techniques for greater productivity in industry are not working very well. We have endless schemes of job evaluation, incentive, bonuses — plans designed to appeal to the self-interests of individual workers. But more often than not the worker tries to beat the system by a minimum of effort rather than enhance his individual earnings by a maximum of effort.

The basis of an incentive system is simple enough. If a worker runs a machine so as to make one piece in fifteen minutes for pay of one dollar, but can be induced by a bonus of 50 per cent to run the machine in the same fifteen minutes a little faster or a little better so as to make a second piece, then the worker has increased his earnings by 50 per cent. And management has reduced its cost by 25 per cent — two pieces for a dollar and a half, seventy-five cents each, instead of a dollar each. It is as simple as that. The system would be marvelous if it worked.

James F. Lincoln, one of the most successful exponents of incentive, admits that 60 per cent of the plans fail. They fail for lack of workers' belief in the honesty of the system. Let us be frank, workers do not trust management. They are not convinced that prices would go down with declining unit costs. They would rather remain skeptical of management than enjoy a higher take-home pay which would result in a reduction of management's costs. This is a harsh conclusion, but nothing else could explain such waste of human talents and of machine capacity.

And yet workers do believe in the system as a whole. They are putting more and more of their efforts into a kind of deferred compensation: pensions, annual wages, vacations, health and accident insurance, various kinds of benefits which do not involve "Get your pay every Friday," but rather are deferments of the sort which bespeaks faith in the system. The figures show that of workers' total compensation about 20 per cent is now invested by them in benefits which do not show up in the payroll and benefits which, by and large, workers trust the company to deliver at some future date.

But this confidence will be misplaced unless there is a wider recognition of the inescapable connection between costs and prices. Management will have to convince labor that the lower costs *will* result in lower prices, in a lower cost of living, and in better economic health for America.

Now I can state my second proposal. I believe that top-level labor and top-level management and top-level government must come together in an open, public, widely publicized conference — one in which all masks come off, all pretenses are abandoned in a collaborative search for the key to greater capitalistic success. The more quickly decent management and decent labor define areas of agreement and explore the true nature of their honest disagreements, the harder it will be for the shysters and the crooks to operate.

The hour is late and the need is great. American capitalism by high costs can be priced out of the market, but, more than that, unless capitalism conquers inflation America can lose the global struggle for men's minds and hearts.

This is the first of a series of papers on labor and management. In March we shall hear from George W. Brooks of the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers.

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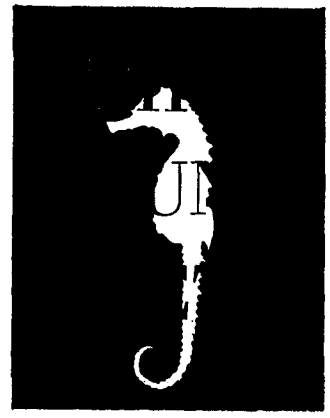

At no time in our past has the ATLANTIC *received as many poems as are now submitted to us. They are evidence of an interest in poetry which never slackens and which often burns most brightly in the undergraduate years. As an incentive for writers yet unestablished, we have set aside each year a number of pages in our February and August issues to be devoted to the work of young poets.*

MARTINIS AT THE SCHNEIDERS'

BY BINK NOLL

Ben and I on dock drip circles.
The Snipe holds on the lake lens
Where we pushed it half a mile

Out of the blue afternoon.
Past a rowboat of neighbors,
Behind an island, burns the sun.

Hello's dissolve like twilit birds.
The monument of the cliff stares
At itself in the black mirror.

There, above, a hired girl cares
Our four kids quiet in the house.
Pastel wives drift down stone stairs

Who bear pitcher, bottles, ice
To celebrate their return
From what it was for which they dressed.

Cylinders of pine, great ferns
They float among. We kiss them back
And drink while air waits clear as horns.

Smaller, from an elsewhere dock
I sailed a toy white liner
Where eight crystal feet down, pike

Waited in submarine danger.
I have kept such peace before.
Not all the bells for dinner

Would break it then or this hour
When I listen to pine roots
Drive again to deeper dark.

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NEW BETHLEHEM, PA.

BY FIRMAN A. HOUGHTON

Here from this hill of many stones
I can oversee myself at play,
A leaper through the streets and into doors.
Immortal as all get out, with bones
Unbreakable and a never-ending day.

My grandmother brought me here, by the hand,
Tender to the hill, uneasy as a bird,
Hushed and impatient at the solemn tones.
Each name and stone became a great remind
Which she half shared with an averted word.

And, oh, the walking down again was kind.
These social stones, born such and such and died,
Cry for an old old woman as a guide.
Why must I come here again? Walking blind.
Having no old lady at my side.

HOKUSAI

BY D. J. HUGHES

One day he awoke
To find the sky a different blue;
The old man, all thumbs
At that original, the true.

How casually it came!
One sky, one drifting cloud, a tree
Limned from the fusty world.
He trembled; he was seventy-three.

Yet there was time for mending,
Time to rework the slavish errors
Of a lifetime's art, time to break through
All those laborious mirrors.

Unmetaphored and whole,
He would stare into the ruined west
Until, tutored by its wound,
All his sight became a palimpsest.

Then cuckoo and heron grew
From their once faltering air
To gesture upon his page
Larger than the sense could bear.

And each thing he saw:
Inchworm, seed, dancer, or clown,
Flung into his fingers
Rhythms that became his own.

Yet something still escaped.
This was only the first of his art.
His youth was to blame.
O learn patience, ambitious heart!

He cursed and prayed and drew.
At eighty, he would find the key.
At ninety, the life of things
Would sing in him like the Inland Sea.

At one hundred, he thought,
I may learn how to draw. Then he wept
To see his hands shake and throat cough.
He knew this truth had slept

And would sleep again. Fury
Danced as the heron went flying.
On his brush, an old man's world,
Peacocked, sentient, dying.

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THE WINNER

BY PETER H. DAVISON

I hear a child inside
Crying to be let out.
"No," shouts the swaggering Self,
"Mind must destroy all doubt.
Doubt shall not interfere—
Stifle that treacherous word!
I have high deeds to do
Twirling my deathly sword."
Mind's on his mettle now
Deft at his surgical art
Stunning my pain with pain
Drowning my infant heart.

TO PRUE, BELOW SLEEP

BY ALBERTA T. TURNER

Up from some tilt-towered slumber
Doomdeep downunder
Your captured bed,
You climbed and clung to me and fled,
Fighting a rear-guard action from your shoulder,
Pelting spent syllables upon my head.

But when I held you, trembling with your tremor,
Shaken by your shaking, and shook you, pled
That I alone was voice and face and danger,
You slanted off in answer to a stranger,
And, dragging your chains behind you, you obeyed.

Night after night you call me, night after night
I knot the words you know me by and grope
Over the edge of your bottomless bed, and look
Down through the spiral dark for the flash and smoke,
And hark for the silence after the crack and shriek,
And feel for the suck and swirl about your breathing;
Yet find no grip at your finger tip,
No foot at your feet,
No blood upon your bleeding.

So if and when, we two again have met,
Plotted by chance again on the same graph,
I have marked the point that you expect,
Have asked what sort of shaft or ladder led
Down to what smoking city through your bed.
"None" (for you are a truthful child), you said.

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BUG TALK

BY FIRMAN A. HOUGHTON

Out of the husk I come to curse the rain:
Wet wing, a blunt course, and no sky.
And all my hairs are tuned to — what is sun?
I have a magnificence that must be done
In this small shell. The best way is not to die.

My one day: and this of it is rain.

VESSELS

BY CRAIG C. McKAY

We are not alone but with ourselves in loneliness,
A little way our passage is shown clear,
A little is seen where we are bound to reach.
Pacing upon ourselves as on a rising deck,
We match our poise to the life we bear,
Move freely as the compass dips,
Gimbaled to each fall and pitch,
And answer to ourselves by answering to the sea.

HEAT OF SNOW

BY JOHN HOLLANDER

When she, laughing, plastered a snowball on me,
all the crisp, white, sherbety cold we both were
waiting for seemed suddenly to have melted;
somehow her shoulders

fell against my own as the thing hit both of
us at once, and then as we fell together
on the high, soft drift that the sun made bright, we
burned, O we burned, but

not because such sunlight was any warmer
than the glaring ice on the pond beyond us,
forcing us to squint as we sat and shivered
later together

when we thought how even inside the snow there
blazed such warmth; how nothing was colder now than
our informing flame; and if ice perhaps might
cool it a little,

then how painful, blinding, the prospect toward the
shimmering pond where, lifeless, the ice awaited
first our shielded gaze, then our tired march and
final arrival.

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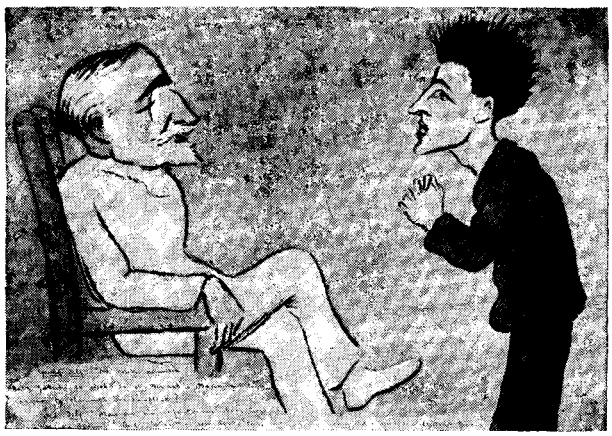
JOSEPH CONRAD: A Footnote to Publishing History

BY

ALFRED A. KNOPF



Caricature of Joseph Conrad, old and young, reproduced by the courtesy of Lady Beerbohm from OBSERVATIONS *by Sir Max Beerbohm, published by William Heinemann Limited.*

ALFRED A. KNOPF *had graduated from Columbia and was serving his apprenticeship at Doubleday, Page & Co. when his enthusiasm for Joseph Conrad first had the opportunity to express itself. It seemed to him shocking that such a master of English prose should be so little read in the United States, and when he was allowed to read the manuscript of Conrad's novel,* CHANCE, *young Knopf initiated a campaign to present the author in a new light.*

When I was an undergraduate at Columbia I sometimes used to buy books at Scribner's retail store, which was then on Fifth Avenue below Twenty-Second Street. A tall soft-spoken gentleman named Simpson worked there, and he sold me *Lord Jim* one day in 1910 or 1911 and thus started me reading Joseph Conrad.

That July I made my first visit to England. In my junior year I had discovered Galsworthy's novels in a secondhand bookshop in Harlem run by Carol Cox and his father. Joel Spingarn, about to be ousted as professor of comparative literature, gave annual prizes for undergraduate stories and essays. I wrote Galsworthy telling him that I was attempting an essay on him and asking for some biographical information. How little he was known in America at that time may be gathered from the answer my teacher, John Erskine, gave me when I asked about the man who had already published *Fraternity:* "He's an Englishman who writes plays for Charles Frohman" — a remark which I must have relayed to Galsworthy, who replied promptly that he didn't write plays for Charles Frohman or for anyone else.

I sent Galsworthy a copy of my paper — the prize was awarded to a far better man, Randolph Bourne — and a correspondence began which ended only with Galsworthy's death. When I told him I would be in England in June, he invited me to spend a night or two in the little cottage he had at Manaton, Devonshire, on the eastern edge of Dartmoor. We must have talked about Conrad, for Galsworthy was his oldest English friend, having met him in March, 1893, when Conrad was first mate of the sailing ship *Torrens* and Galsworthy a passenger. Galsworthy and a friend, Ted Sanderson, made a long trip to the South Seas hoping to see Robert Louis Stevenson, whom they greatly admired. But they turned back at Adelaide, on the *Torrens*, and Sanderson went right to London, while Galsworthy stopped over in South Africa. Anyway, a few weeks later, I read in a Tauchnitz edition those wonderful stories, *A Set of Six*, as I traveled by easy stages from Chamonix across Switzerland to Basel. They really *got* me; I had found my idol.

In the fall of 1912 I managed to secure very humble employment with Doubleday, Page &

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Company, newly moved to their great Country Life Press at Garden City. I worked there for eighteen months, first in the accounting and then in the manufacturing department. To my delight I found that the firm had published many of Conrad's books: *Youth*, the volume of stories called *Falk*, *Lord Jim*, and the two novels written in collaboration with Ford Madox Hueffer, *The Inheritors* and *Romance*. In those days it seemed to me fantastic that a great writer shouldn't have a large audience. I knew little as yet of the problems of publishing and, ignorant of my own ignorance, was completely happy. But I must have talked Conrad day in and day out to my associates. After all, James Huneker had written enthusiastically about him, and H. L. Mencken had been beating a drum for him for years.

In those days George H. Doran was publishing, with few exceptions, the best of the contemporary British novelists — his firm was at the top of its brilliant form — most of whom were represented by J. B. Pinker of London, who was also Conrad's agent and had indeed staked Conrad rather handsomely for years. (To manage this Pinker always demanded generous advances from Conrad's American publishers. He got them, but the novels never paid back these advances, and as a result by 1912 there were books by Conrad on the lists of Macmillan, Appleton, Dodd Mead, Putnam, Scribner's, and Harper's, as well as Doubleday. Harper's had run the course longer than anyone else — from *Nostromo* in 1904 to *A Personal Record* in 1912.) Now Doran cast his line and hooked *'Twixt Land and Sea*. But sometime early in 1913 Frank Doubleday (Effendi to all of us) returned from London with a contract that committed his firm once and for all to Conrad. Doran turned over *'Twixt Land and Sea*, and shortly we received the manuscript of *Chance*.

Doubleday, Page & Company was an exciting place for a youngster just out of college; he was really given his head. Thus I was allowed to sit in on the weekly editorial meetings held in the firm's handsome dining room, and I was allowed to take the manuscript of *Chance* home and to be the first to read it. I was completely bowled over. I hastened to write to my friend Galsworthy, and I still recapture after more than forty years the thrill with which I read my first letter from Conrad which followed.

Capel House
July 20, 1913

DEAR MR. KNOPF:

Mr. Galsworthy has communicated to me your very interesting and friendly letter. I assure you that I am very sensible of the good opinion you have of my work (which dear Hudson also likes) and I congratulate myself on it — since if you had not "happened along," all these books would have remained on the back shelves of the firm where they have been reposing for the last ten years. I see in your letter that you suspect me of undue aloofness. It is not so. I am very much interested; I find it quite exciting to be rediscovered by my own publisher, after such a long time.

I have manifested as much interest in my publishers as my publishers have in me — nothing less; it would be unreasonable to expect more from a man — and I don't know that any angel has yet taken to literature. At any rate, I am not he.

Writing to you as to a good friend of my work, I must begin by saying that in business I am a partisan of frank speech as much as of frank dealing. I am glad to hear that Doubleday, Page & Co. has bought two of my vols. from Mr. Doran. It is a sign of interest. But the fact remains that Mr. Doubleday might have had all my books up to date in his hands if he had cared. Other people bought them and I haven't heard that they have been ruined by it; though I did not give away my work for ten cents a volume, I can assure you. I am not an amateur who plays at it. It's anything but play with me. Perhaps Mr. Doubleday does not know it, but it's a fact that ever since *Nostromo* (1904) every line of my writing has been serialized in the U.S. — with the exception of the *Mirror of the Sea*, of which however a good part appeared in *Harper's Weekly*. And the *Mirror* is not the sort of stuff to be read in the Elevated train or on the river-ferry while going home. Yet even here the *Pall Mall Mag:* (a popular sixpenny) published several papers out of it, *Blackwood* two or three, and a great penny daily the last two.

Why did these people do these things? Surely not from personal liking. I don't know a single magazine editor here, not even by sight. Of the men on your side, I have seen Col. Harvey once — years ago. Obviously there is something in what I do, some ground to go upon. It is also a fact that ever since *The Nigger* (published by Appleton in 1898 under the absurdly sweet title, *Children of the Sea*) I have had in the U.S. a very good press — invariably. And you cannot deny that the majority of writers of notices in newspapers are men of average tastes. When it comes to popularity I stand much nearer the public mind than Stevenson, who was super-literary, a conscious virtuoso of style; whereas the average mind does not care much for virtuosity. My point of view, which is purely human, my subjects, which are not too specialized as to the class of people or kind of events, my style, which may be clumsy here and there, but is perfectly straight-

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forward and tending towards the colloquial, cannot possibly stand in the way of a large public. As to what I have to say — you know it is never outrageous to mind or feeling. Is it interesting? Well, I have been and am being translated into all the European languages, except Spanish and Italian. They would hardly do that for a bore.

There are two methods in the publishing business. The first is speculative. A book is a venture. Hit or miss. To a certain extent it must be so. But here and there a writer may be taken up as an investment. An investment must be attended to, it must be nursed — if one believes in it. I can't develop much feeling for a publisher who takes me on the "hit or miss" basis. A gamble is not a connection. What position I have attained I owe to no publisher's efforts. Sixteen years of hard work begin to tell.

The question for me is: Has the Doubleday, Page Co. simply bought two books of mine or is it to be a connection? If it is the last, then you will find me responsive enough. I appreciate warmly the practical evidence of your good will towards my work. The writing of this long letter (which is not in my habits) is the best proof of it, for I should not have cared to open my mind like this to an indifferent stranger, I can assure you.

All I can do to help you form a stable connection between me and the firm I am ready to do — even to the sacrifice of my personal tastes. To begin with I shall at once revise the notes on me and send them to you, I hope by the same ship with this letter. As to the portrait: I shall this week make arrangements with the Cadbys (a couple in great repute as photographers. Very artistic) to have more than one photograph taken in their best manner. The photos will be in your hands in good time before the publication of *Chance*. The Rothenstein portrait we like very much, but something more recent is needed, I think.

For the future: A young literary friend of mine, Mr. Richard Curle, was here some time ago and asked my permission to write a book on me, a critical monograph on my work. Don't think I mean a cheap puff: it would be an interesting attempt to describe my subjects and my methods. Say 50–60 thousand words. It would be exactly what's wanted to educate readers. He knows my work backwards. I may ask him to begin at once and the little book could be ready in some six months. But I can't very well ask him to drop everything and get on with that study unless I may tell him that you will, when the work is ready, consider it in a favourable spirit for publication in the U.S. Of course I don't suggest you binding yourself in advance. What do you say?

And there is another thing. Last year I published with Harpers' a short volume entitled: *A Personal Record*. A bit of autobiography — and a bit of good writing as well. I let it go to them at a royalty of 10%, because Harpers' have in one way or another paid me a good lot of money in the last five years; thinking also that they would try to do something special with it. But apparently not. They sold a couple of thousand copies, I believe, on the strength of the name, and that's all. This book, rather intimate, quite readable, and for which I care in a special way — is just wasted. Now if you could buy it from Harpers' at once and put it before the public properly in a cheap edition (I am going to arrange for a 2/6 ed. here), say 50c., I believe it would do good. I would suggest extending the title, as thus: *A Personal Record*, by J. Conrad. *The Story of His First Book and of His First Contact with the Sea*. As a matter of fact it is just that. And if people really want that sort of thing they will be able to learn a lot about me from that little book.

Now if Doubleday, Page & Co. can and will do that and use it for the publicity (I don't mean sending men with loaded guns to force it on people, but everything short of that) then for my part I am ready to forego my royalties (under the agreement with Harpers') for three years — *except* in the case of that vol: coming out with others in a uniform edition before the three years expire.

I am ready to embody my proposal in an agreement as soon as you have succeeded in extracting the thing from Harpers', which may not be difficult if attempted at once. I don't think I could do more to show my interest in the connection with your house, and my appreciation of your efforts on my behalf.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with friendliest feelings.

P.S. I am very busy finishing my next novel — the one I told Mr. Doubleday all about. I hope he wasn't bored to death. Please give him my kind regards. I'll try to send you in time corrected galley slips to set up *Chance* from. I recommend to you that book very specially, for, of its *kind*, it isn't a thing that one does twice in a lifetime!

I have no copy of my reply to this letter, but what I wrote, by Doubleday's instructions, may be inferred from my next one from Conrad.

Capel House
August 24, 1913

MY DEAR MR. KNOPF:

I have your letter of the 13th inst. for which thanks.

In the matter of Curle's book I certainly did not ask you (meaning the firm) for anything binding.

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But the idea of the publication in United States by means of English sheets does not commend itself to me. Both Mr. Conrad as subject and Mr. Curle as writer deserve better treatment. I assure you he is not a hack-writer. I am personally very much interested in the book, for reasons of which some are on the surface and for others which lie much deeper. I mean that book to be published in the United States independently of all arrangements in England; and I have good grounds to think that, should you decline it, I can carry the transaction out elsewhere. You don't seem to realize that a book about Conrad *will* get published anyhow. And I mean Mr. Curle (who out of regard for me has put other work aside) to get a decent royalty and a small advance for his critical volume.

As to the *Personal Record*. I regret to say that my suggestion was not prompted by any specific information. I just threw it out on general principles. Harpers' had it cheap. They haven't made any special effort with it and I concluded that they would let it go if approached diplomatically. I am glad you think on re-reading that there is much to learn about me in it. Truly it is the very heart and essence of Conrad. And if people are only told that sympathetically, they begin to see that it is so.

The Falk volume question is interesting to me, but I fear there are no details that I could give you as to the origin of the stories. The volume failed with the public, because it was decapitated. It ought to have had "Typhoon" for the first story as published in England. But for some reason you allowed "Typhoon" to go to Putnam. I don't shovel together my stories in a haphazard fashion. "Typhoon" belonged to that volume; on artistic and literary grounds; and its absence ruined the chances of the other stories. The reading of that first story attuned the mind for the reception of the others. And the public by neglecting "Falk" and the others recognized obscurely that the volume had its head off — that it was a corpse which, I fear, you will have some difficulty to galvanize into any sort of popularity. There's no harm in trying. But you must be careful not to put people off by forcing on them work of which the quality is not so much on the surface. Later on they will understand me better and recognize the artistic finish of "Falk" and of "Amy Foster" — two of the most highly finished of my stories. Well! No more to-day.

P.S. Yes, I do care very much for *Romance*. I'll give your message to the Galsworthys before long.

A little later Conrad wrote me about a lawyer in New York — John Quinn — to whom he had been selling his manuscripts from time to time. In the New York telephone directory I found many John Quinns but, as luck would have it, I lighted the very first time on the right one. Quinn was fantastic; he was going away but if I would come to his office at 31 Nassau Street he would have his confidential clerk, Curtin by name, place his Conrad file at my disposal. And thus I came to read a most remarkable correspondence, one that seemed to me at the time almost heartbreakingly tragic. Conrad was always hard up, frequently ill — in a generally sorry state. He would discover a manuscript — or pretend to — and send it on to Quinn, who would buy it at whatever price seemed fair to him. There was nothing wrong with that, for manuscripts by Conrad surely had no market anywhere in those days.

My withers were wrung. I was young; I think I was ingenious; and I know I was brash, presumptuous, shameless. I ordered a fine personal letterhead, on handmade paper imported by the old Japan Paper Company; I lived at home in Lawrence, Long Island, with my parents, and had this address engraved on it; and I composed a letter designed to make its recipient run, not walk, to the assistance of Joseph Conrad.

I do not have a copy of that letter, but I know that I described my hero's plight, asked for what we now so inelegantly call a *blurb* (we didn't know the word then) about his work, and added mysteriously that I was in a position to see that any favorable comment sent me would be circulated through his publishers and the press. This letter went to many popular writers of the day: Basil King, Rex Beach, Louis Joseph Vance, William Dean Howells, Winston Churchill (the novelist), Harold Bell Wright, Robert W. Service, George Barr McCutcheon, Jack London, Theodore Dreiser, Meredith Nicholson, and Mary Austin. To all I sent an advance copy of *Chance*. Only Dreiser suspected a connection with Doubleday.

The generosity with which most of them responded struck me as touching. Robert W. Service wrote me (he is now eighty-four years old and the only one of my correspondents still alive):

> . . . I am glad indeed to have an opportunity of expressing my admiration for the works of one who is regarded by all competent critics as (with two possible exceptions) the greatest living master of English prose. Mr. Conrad is pre-eminently the Writer's Writer, one to whom the fastidious reader may yield with an absolute confidence. . . . To us who write, his gleaming, supple prose is at once an inspiration and a reproach. He reassures, he stimulates. He has a magic power of evoking atmosphere, or hurling at us luminous phrases, packed with meaning, of combining in some fresh surprising way three or four words so that they conjure up a vivid and irresistible picture in our minds.

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And from George Barr McCutcheon:

> . . . I have liked *all* of Conrad's books. To my notion, he is one of the greatest of living writers, and I believe he will take his place among the leading men in literature in time and the century just closed. *Chance* is but a single illustration of his power. It deserves to live, with the rest of his stories.

And Basil King:

> Thanks for your kind letter received this morning. I am sorry to have been so long in sending you my modest opinion of Conrad's book, but owing to lack of sight and the necessity of reading with a magnifying glass, I am slow at any task of the kind. In this case I regret it the less, since it is a book to be read with the concentration of the tastes with which one savours good wines. It is a book in which one can afford to pass nothing over. The flashes of observation thrown out by those who tell the tale — wise, humorous, or tender, as the case may be — are as remarkable as the tale itself, like the precious stones set in the binding of a missal. As I have told you already, I know of no more appealing figure in fiction than Flora de Barral, nor of a more manly one than Anthony. But of the book's many striking qualities none is to me more impressive than the degree to which the concluding sentence justifies the quotation from Sir Thomas Browne on the title page, delimiting the significance of the title itself and rounding out the sphere of the author's thought. Unity of purpose could go no further.

And Rex Beach:

> . . . Joseph Conrad stands for the highest mark in present day English fiction. I consider him the greatest living author in the English language and have read nearly everything he has written. That his books are not more widely circulated in this country has always been a mystery to me . . .

But the veteran William Dean Howells after a second approach:

> I did not reply to your letter of some weeks ago, because I supposed it was generally understood that I never gave opinions of books which were to be used as advertisements. The fact that you would "see my remarks circulated through publishers and the press" seemed to me sufficient reason for not making any. I am sorry if I seem to have neglected your letter.

And from Harold Bell Wright, probably the biggest-selling novelist of the day:

> Mr. Conrad's book *Chance* and your letters relative to Mr. Conrad's work at hand.
>
> As to Mr. Wright's writing a paragraph for the purpose of furthering the sale of Mr. Conrad's books; I am sure that a moment's reflection will convince you that such a thing is practically out of the question. Mr. Wright, though receving [sic] many calls of this kind has made it a rule to not give any letter for publicity, for you can see that did he do so in the case of one writer, he would be overrun with letters requesting the same from writers all over the country, and of course it would be manifestly impossible for him to comply with all requests, which would cause many writers to feel that they had been unjustly discriminated against.
>
> Yours very respectfully,
> B. H. Pearson, Sec'y

Meanwhile my indulgent employers allowed me to write and sign a booklet on Conrad which they printed and distributed widely, and we came to the publication of *Chance* with such a battery of critical praise that its success was assured and indeed the ground laid for a very substantial market for many years for all of Conrad's books.

In the spring of 1914 I left Garden City to go to work for Mitchell Kennerley, then a small highly personal publisher with a list already studded with such distinguished names as Walter Lippmann, A. S. M. Hutchinson, D. H. Lawrence, and Joseph Hergesheimer. Kennerley, incidentally, was a great friend of John Quinn. After this I had little contact with Conrad for many years, though we exchanged an occasional letter. But in 1921 Mrs. Knopf and I drove his great friend, Richard Curle, from London to Canterbury for lunch with Conrad at Bishopsbourne, his house nearby, and there we met for the first time.

Then two years later we took Thomas Beer down to see him to discuss the introduction he had promised to write for Beer's *Stephen Crane*. Conrad was in fine form; we had already after years of neglect made the books of his dear friend Hudson popular in America, and now we were promising to do our best for his "Stevie." As we left for the station he accompanied us to the door, and the last words I heard him speak were, "Now we must do something for Robert."

I never saw him again, and the books of Robert (R. B. Cunningham-Graham) never have been much read over here.

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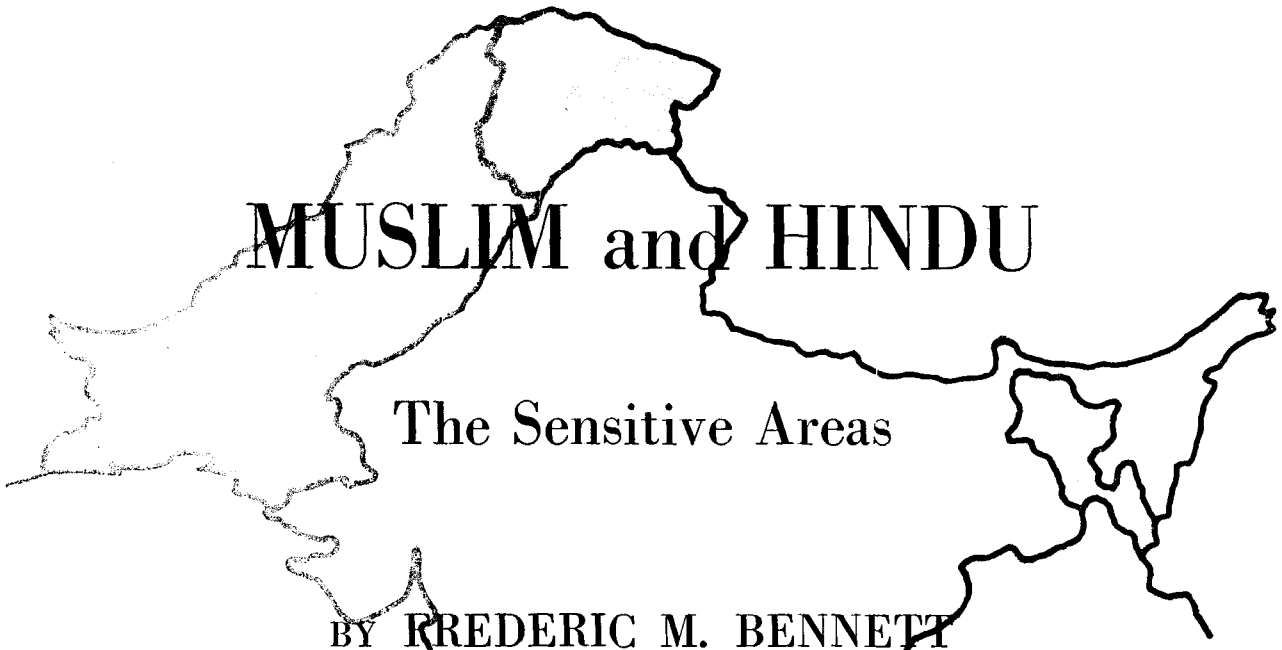

MUSLIM and HINDU

The Sensitive Areas

BY FREDERIC M. BENNETT

A Conservative member of Parliament who served as a parliamentary private secretary to the Under-Secretary of State, Home Office, 1953–1955, FREDERIC M. BENNETT *has shown an increasing concern for the subcontinent of India, which he first visited during World War II and which he has returned to observantly since the separation of India and Pakistan.*

A DECADE has passed since the struggle of the Indian subcontinent to free itself from British imperial rule was crowned with success. For half a century or more before emancipation, nationalists of both the great religious communities had stridently asserted that communal antipathy was illusory — a mere creation of the British Raj, allegedly following the old Roman maxim of "divide and rule." History since independence has shown with tragic clarity that antagonism between Muslim and Hindu is much more deeply rooted than in an oppressor's stratagem. For the ink was not yet dry on the 1947 charter of sovereignty before what had been one great single nation under British rule became split into two sullenly hostile countries, Pakistan and India.

However regrettable, this state of affairs is not really surprising. Long before the British conquered India, the Hindus had resented their Muslim Mogul masters and those who by conversion followed the same faith. The Muslim for his part had all the scorn of the warrior for those less martial than himself, not untainted with an intellectual inferiority complex vis-à-vis those commercially and politically more astute than he. With this historic background it would have required more courage, tolerance, and statecraft than any leaders in Delhi or Karachi have yet shown to heal the hereditary strains between the two great communal factions.

Instead, as each year passes, friction grows. What began with a squabble about the division of assets after partition, and went on to bitter conflict over the future of disputed princely states such as Hyderabad, Junagadh, and Kashmir, has now spread to the struggle for limited, precious irrigation water which literally spells life or death for millions upon millions of poverty-stricken, undernourished, illiterate peasants.

Externally, too, a wide gulf has yawned. Pakistan, West and East, with barely a fifth of the population of her larger neighbor, cut asunder by over 1500 miles of Indian territory, fearful of ultimate Indian subjection and absorption, has in her search for allies gone much further than she otherwise might have in openly siding with the West in the global struggle against Communism. For although Pakistan's opposition to Communism is genuine, there is no doubt that to the average Pakistani, India, not Soviet Russia or Red China, is the number one foe.

India, superior in manpower and resources, is fundamentally resentful of, in her view, the quite unnecessarily continued existence of the only nation that stands between her and the complete hegemony of the Indian subcontinent. Nehru is not alone in the ambition to see his country leading a great Asian uncommitted third force between warring Capitalist West and Communist East. Inclined toward Communism to meet the social and political demands of his teeming peoples, he does not openly break with the West in

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shrewd calculation that only thence can flow the capital and technical know-how to ensure his country's economic survival and its development. Pakistan, firmly linked with one side, the West, is a hindrance to this tightrope policy.

In Kashmir, hostility has reached near flash point. Today an uneasy peace is maintained between the two zones of rival occupation only through the vigilant presence of UN officers and troops ceaselessly patrolling the demarcation line.

In the Indian-occupied sector of this unhappy state, with a handful of local stooges backed by Hindu and Sikh troops keeping in subjection 3 million resentful Muslims, conditions remind one of life in one of the Soviet satellites. As you walk down a street in Srinagar, the state's capital, a man sidles up to you, mutters something in barely intelligible English, and warily presses a crumpled piece of paper into your hand. Nearby stand a couple of police. On the other side of the road a detachment of grim-faced soldiers marches along. Behind you casually strolls your own particular shadow, the man who seems always to be hanging around the lobby of your hotel when you come down from your room, looking at nothing in particular; who always decides to take a walk when you do; and who always, too, stops aimlessly when you pause on your way.

When you get back to the privacy of your own room, you look at the scribbled message which you were handed: it is either a plea for outside intervention of the forces of freedom, or a letter to a friend or relative across the border, which the writer knows would never pass the censor if posted the ordinary way. A few minutes later your telephone rings, and a voice hysterical with fear asks whether a few opponents of the regime may come and talk privately with you. Hours later, a handful of tired, nervous men crowd into your room, insisting on searching every corner for hidden microphones before they talk. They are late because the police, knowing of their plans through wire tapping, have forbidden all taxis, the only transport available, to bring them, and so they have had to walk several dusty miles. Their story is sickeningly familiar in this day and age — a tale of persecution, repression, midnight arrests, and aggrandizement of the local "Big Brother."

Officials do not deny that thousands of Indian soldiers and gendarmery are stationed in the state to help preserve an outward calm. (Reliable estimates put the figure at 12 ,000 — one soldier to every dozen adult inhabitants of occupied Kashmir.) A rigid censorship exists. All public assemblies and gatherings, except regime-sponsored ones, are banned. The prisons are full to overflowing, and those behind bars include twenty-five or more political leaders — among them a former prime minister — who are being detained under a local law which permits imprisonment without charge or trial, on executive order alone, for periods of up to five years.

As to the recent elections there, Hitler and Stalin could have approved of their conception and execution. In the Vale of Kashmir itself, only five out of a total of forty-five constituencies were contested, all the others returning unopposed ruling party candidates. Moreover, even where the five contests did occur, permitted opposition candidature was limited to purely domestic controversy. This was inevitable, since it is "unlawful," under the constitution imposed from Delhi last year, for anyone to declare for any policy other than the status quo of absorption into India.

To appreciate how this sorry state of affairs has come about, one has to recall the year 1947, when Britain handed over the reins of government to the two newly born states of Pakistan and India, with consequent partitioning of the subcontinent. So far as the then autonomous princely states were concerned, they were faced with three choices: accession to India or to Pakistan or complete independence. The third alternative proved in every case illusory.

The last British Viceroy, Earl Mountbatten, then holding the ring between the rival claimants in this territorial lottery, affecting more than five hundred separate states and 93 million people, declared, with the prior approval of the governments of both India and Pakistan, the considerations that should decide the states' choice. The overriding factor was to be the will of the people concerned, which was to be implemented through the medium of a formal accession instrument lodged by the ruler either in Delhi or Karachi. In cases where the ruler's personal wishes conflicted or were likely to conflict on communal religious or other grounds with those of his subjects, the latters' will, to be given a free, prompt opportunity to express itself, should prevail.

Meanwhile, in any instance where the issue seemed to be in doubt, interim agreements could be entered into with one or both of the national claimants, in order to preserve certain existing essential links, such as the postal system and trade.

To the general principle of self-determination, the Viceroy added a practical warning that in reaching a decision the inescapable consequences of frontier contiguity could not be ignored. What happened next is history.

In Junagadh, a small princedom with a Muslim ruler but a population which was predominantly Hindu, surrounded by Indian territory except for

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an outlet to the sea, the decision of the Nawab to join Pakistan was immediately thwarted by force of Indian arms — in the name of democracy.

In Hyderabad, one of the few princely states large enough and strong enough economically to support itself, the Muslim ruler of a largely Hindu population opted, as was his constitutional right, for total independence, and initiated a referendum to test the will of his subjects. Refusing to await the outcome of this, the Indian government, in what it soothingly described as a "police action," entered the territory with tanks and infantry and forcibly integrated the state with India.

In Kashmir, partition rivalry between India and Pakistan produced an even more confused and dangerous situation. Thankful for an opportunity at long last to rid themselves of the autocratic minority Hindu regime which had ruled them so long, the local population supported by sympathetic tribesmen from outside the state rose in revolt and drove the Maharajah from the land. The fleeing Prince sought Indian help and, in exchange for the promise of Indian military intervention on his side, signed an accession instrument in favor of India. In accepting this purported accession, the Indian government also accepted the condition that it should subsequently be ratified by a free and fair expression of the people's will. Meanwhile, Pakistan refused to accept at all the validity of the ousted ruler's accession, and fearful of her own national security as Indian troops continued their advance northward toward her own frontiers, Pakistan moved her troops into Kashmir and a local war began.

It was at this point that Nehru, who now so bitterly complains of United Nations interference in "an internal domestic matter," took the matter to the Security Council for settlement. After much bitter wrangling, a temporary truce and cease fire was arranged and accepted by both sides. From that day to this, the story of Kashmir has been one of endlessly recurring delay, procrastination, and obstruction, by which India has sought to evade the obligations to hold a plebiscite that she solemnly affirmed between 1947 and 1949. Argument and counterargument have ranged over who was the original aggressor, the number of troops of each side that would have to be withdrawn before a fair test of public opinion could be held, and the terms and timing of the plebiscite.

In patient efforts to end the deadlock, mediator after mediator, investigatory commission after investigatory commission, conciliator after conciliator, have been appointed. Despite even the division in the Security Council between Communist and non-Communist powers, one unanimous recommendation after another — eleven in all, including neutral arbitration of the points of detail still in dispute — have been put forward. Every time Pakistan has said "Yes," India has said "No." Always, as one argument is met or falls to the ground, Nehru or his delegate at the United Nations, Krishna Menon, supported lately only by Soviet Russia, produces another, with seemingly inexhaustible fertility and often total irrelevance. Thus quite recently, when it at last seemed that the clouds were lifting, India suddenly announced that because Pakistan had joined in such anti-Communist security treaties with the West as SEATO and the Baghdad Pact, and had accepted military aid from the United States, Kashmir's self-determination was permanently debarred. Now the issue is once more firmly back in the "For Urgent Action" file of the UN.

While this controversy continues to rage, another perhaps even more menacing quarrel divides India and Pakistan; that of the division of their natural water resources. The Indus basin, watered by the Indus and its five main tributaries, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej, all having their source in Indian territory, forms one of the largest irrigation systems in the world, created during the bygone days of British rule. On partition, the duly authorized representatives of both the two new countries gave assurances that each would abide by well-established principles of international law, requiring all riparian users of common rivers to respect one another's established uses and to divide surplus waters, in accordance with the rule of equitable apportionment. Patient efforts by the International Bank in Washington have so far failed to find a solution that would produce for India the extra irrigatory supplies she needs for her increasing millions of impoverished peasants, without reducing the flow no less vitally needed by Pakistan to feed her own fast-growing population. For India the problem is grave, but for Pakistan it is one of national survival.

If on this, as on all other outstanding issues between India and Pakistan, any permanent cure of the present estrangement is to be effected, sacrifices and gestures will have to be made by both sides. Yet it is India who will have to make the first constructive efforts to break the log jam. For it is her recalcitrance that blocks the UN attempts to provide a settlement of the Kashmir quarrel; it is her obstinacy, based doubtless on uneasy foreknowledge of the probable verdict, that prevents the Canal Waters dispute going to the International Court of Justice at The Hague for adjudication. Is it too much to hope that Nehru, who has already lost so much of the moral stature he had gained for himself and his country since the war, will yet, before it is too tragically late, have second thoughts?

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Books and Men

It is a rare thing in any year to find two books about a living man — both appearing on the best-seller list. But Bernard Baruch, now in his eighty-eighth year, is an American phenomenon who deserves such attention. For our appraisal we turn to John Harriman, *novelist and financial columnist for the Boston* globe *who has known Mr. Baruch for many years.*

THE INSCRUTABLE MR. BARUCH

BY JOHN HARRIMAN

Bernard Baruch made his first millions before the automobile arrived to change the American scene, and he has lived to see the possibility that man may destroy himself in nuclear holocaust. Baruch is a legend that actually bridges three eras, seeming equally at home intellectually in all. The legend emerged in the New York of the old Waldorf, the Wall Street of the robber barons and the great stock market plungers. It flourished during World War I and the political emergence of the Common Man during the Great Depression. It survives now in the long, white reaches of the Cold War and the atomic mushroom.

Through these momentous events Baruch has moved as an enigmatic figure, flashing into public notice, then fading. The people have seen him fitfully, and always just a little larger than life size. He has been the brilliant speculator who was never wrong on the stock market, the cosmopolite who knew everyone worth knowing and never missed an opening night or a big prize fight. He was the mobilizer of industry in World War I, the man of many special missions, and in the recent past the elder statesman waiting quietly on a park bench to be called into the White House for consultation.

Many men have made fortunes in the stock market, and kept them, like Baruch. But most of these went on to become bankers or, like E. H. Harriman, to operate the mines or industries or railroads over which their wealth had given them control. But Baruch did not. He has remained the trader, the speculator who buys the stocks of companies not to control but to sell at a profit. In Wall Street he was never a part of any group, but a lone wolf without entanglements and responsible only to himself and his own judgment.

Baruch has always been a puzzling character, and remains so now in his eighty-eighth year, despite the publication within six months of volume one of his autobiography, *Baruch, My Own Story*, and of *Mr. Baruch*, by the Pulitzer Prize winner Margaret L. Coit.

There has long been speculation as to who would finally write the Baruch biography. Marquis James, until his death, was generally supposed to be slated for the job. But when six years ago Baruch read Miss Coit's biography of his fellow South Carolinian, John C. Calhoun, the matter was settled. To Miss Coit Baruch gave access to all his private papers. Then in August, three months before the Coit biography was to be published, there appeared Baruch's own autobiography.

No explanation has come from the publisher of either book, nor has Baruch made any comment. But in the notes following the appendix of Miss Coit's biography appears the following:

> After I had been at this work for more than five years and had completed a preliminary draft of my manuscript, Mr. Baruch closed his papers to me and withheld permission to quote from his unpublished writings, including his letters and memoirs.
>
> I was therefore obliged to rewrite this manuscript.

It has not been revealed who, if anyone, helped Baruch with his autobiography, or if it contains any of an earlier Marquis James manuscript. Nor do we know what Baruch objected to in the Coit manuscript, which has become a massive and imposing biography by any standard and which was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection.

The first volume of the autobiography will be followed by a sequel. The one now published contains many reflections upon stock market speculation and investment, but its story ends before Baruch entered public life.

This is not a reflective book in any personal

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sense, but the picture it draws is clear and interesting: the boy who rode beside his doctor father in a two-seated buggy and gazed over the family land that was "set out in sugar cane one year," and his emergence as the Baruch of Wall Street — the skilled speculator who knew everyone: the plungers, the traders, the bankers, the great as well as the merely spectacular.

Baruch has always loved South Carolina and the land, and with the wealth he had won in Wall Street he returned to his native state to Hobcaw Barony, the 17,000-acre plantation which has meant so much to him during the past fifty years. Care and money were lavished on this estate, with its azaleas, its beaches, salt marshes, sand, and pine, its "four rivers and a bay."

Hobcaw was teeming with game: duck, wild turkey, deer. Here have come a president, a prime minister, senators, actors and actresses, writers. They came to rest, to relax, and to talk with their host, the slender giant of a man with graying hair and almost fiercely twinkling blue eyes.

In Miss Coit's book, much longer and more objectively written, the man Baruch takes on greater depth. Yet even here he never emerges completely. Perhaps this is because Miss Coit, as with most fine biographies, tells more than the story of her protagonist; she also tells the story of his time. And the times in which Baruch has lived and played so prominent a role are such as to dwarf any man.

It was Woodrow Wilson who brought Baruch into public life and provided the turning point in his career. On the day after he met Wilson, Baruch is quoted by Miss Coit as saying, "I have met one of the great men of the world." And, thirty years later, "If I have been able to serve my country, it is he [Wilson] who planted the seeds." Miss Coit herself adds: "He spoke the truth. It was Wilson of the New Freedom who released Baruch's talents, who gave the world the future statesman. With the one exception of his father, Woodrow Wilson was the greatest influence on Baruch's life."

Baruch has had his differences with subsequent presidents, but Wilson he could serve without reservation or question. When he disagreed with Wilson, he told him so, and the President would reply with "Why?"

Unlike World War II, World War I was for this country almost entirely a problem in logistics and supply. The strategy had been set by the introduction of the machine gun as a military weapon long before our entrance into the war, and the tactics were in large measure in the hands of the generals of our allies. Ours was the job of producing the goods of war, the ships and the masses of munitions and guns with which to break the trench stalemate on the Western front and to tighten the naval blockade. This job Wilson gave to Baruch, with extraordinary powers and undeviating support. The German General Staff gave the best testimony as to how well the task was accomplished. The American industrialists understood war, they said.

The years 1917–1918 must have been very satisfying to Baruch. He was superbly equipped for the task at hand. He was already "Baruch of Wall Street." He knew personally not only the men who ran the big corporations but, what was more important, the men who controlled them and were really in a position to give a yes or a no.

Baruch could speak the language of industry. What was more, he could knock heads together with impunity. He had always run alone, and after the war he would continue to do so; he never had to pause at the prospect of offending an associate or alienating a friend. It is not Baruch's intellect that is impressive, nor any particular originality of thought, although his mind must be very logical and clear. It is that he has the gift of understanding people, individually and collectively; how they react; what they are like.

This is what has made Baruch the great speculator he has always been. He studied companies in whose stocks he was interested. He gathered the figures and collected the facts. But other men have done the same, and gone bankrupt. Baruch could sit down with the facts and figures, and let his mind take him on from there. What were the thousands of investors all over the country thinking? Were they still being carried forward on the tide of optimism, or was that tide beginning to ebb? Was the collective mind of the financial community still possessed by the vision of profit, or was the vision beginning to be eroded by fear?

Yet with all his sense of public reaction, and despite an obvious desire to serve his country, Baruch has never entered actively into political life on his own account. He has never run for public office. Two really important political jobs have been offered him, Secretary of the Treasury and Chairman of the National Democratic Committee. He turned them both down. He has been content to remain the man of special boards and missions, the adviser behind the scenes.

Miss Coit sees this holding back from the real arena of public life as a "tragedy," the reason why Baruch's friend Garet Garrett could mention "frustration" as the word most accurately summing up his career. What has held Baruch back? Miss Coit thinks it was his fear of failure: "not a conviction of inadequacy . . . but an unwilling-

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ness to risk the rebuff of an unfavorable public opinion should he fail."

"Having at least cooperated in creating Baruch the Myth," Miss Coit says, "Baruch the man has become its victim." She reminds us of the attacks of racial prejudice that hurt both the man and his family, and the snubbing by the banker J. P. Morgan, who had been the ideal of Baruch's youth.

The autobiography gives no clues. The portrait here certainly indicates no frustration, but is that of a man proud of his family, satisfied with his friends, and content with the achievements of his career.

As the Baruch myth grew, it began to hide the man. Baruch does not emerge with much credit from Miss Coit's description of his much-publicized break with Harry Truman. Whatever Truman's personal failings, he will be remembered in history for the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine, the Berlin airlift, the boldness of his action in Korea, and his tenacity in the Cold War. Yet Baruch seems to have acted toward him with the condescension of a schoolmaster explaining algebra to a backward pupil, and then to have become petulant when Truman did not immediately leap to follow his advice.

Certainly Baruch's role of critic of our economic policy during the Korean War was an embarrassment rather than a help to the Administration. Everyone knew the danger then, inflation, and what ought to be done to control runaway prices. But Truman had to work within the frame of political realities. He knew that neither Congress nor the country would stand for an all-out freeze on prices, rents, wages, credit, which Baruch advocated forcefully before a Senate committee. The advice which Truman would have valued from the always politically astute Baruch was not what should be done, but how to go about getting the country and Congress to do it.

At the committee hearings, according to Miss Coit, Baruch was asked how soon such an all-out freeze should go into effect.

"Right now. Toot suite. Today," he replied. He pleaded that the costs of the war should be met by new taxes. But this proposal could hardly have aroused much enthusiasm in Truman's financial advisers. They knew what ought to be done. They also knew, as Baruch must have too, that "ought" is sometimes a very sad word in politics. Besides, neither this nor any other country has ever paid the cost of a war in modern times out of current taxation.

Perhaps by this time the Baruch myth had grown beyond the man, had been stretched to include qualities that the man himself did not possess. Baruch has great personal charm, with a clear, forceful, and very flexible intellect. But the myth by now is of one all knowing, all seeing, all wise.

Has the myth come to obscure the man? Is this why, despite the millions of words written about him, including now these two books, Baruch is still not quite clear, not quite real, why he still remains an enigma?

ATLANTIC "FIRSTS"

For eleven years the *Atlantic* has held out a special incentive to short-story writers. In January, 1946 we began to publish what we called Atlantic "Firsts" — short stories by unestablished writers making their first appearance in our pages. We are happy to announce the following prize winners for 1957:

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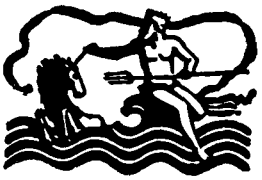

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The Peripatetic Reviewer BY EDWARD WEEKS

A FRIEND of my boyhood in New Jersey, DeWitt Clinton Jones, has sent me half a dozen picture post cards, photographs taken on the beach at Bay Head in the summer of 1907. I was then one of the small fry, a skinny nine-year-old, with big ears, and I find myself one of a group in bathing suits photographed at the water's edge, hair plastered down and eyes squinting against the bright morning sun. Most of us were members of a semi-fraternal order known as The Booze Beers. (Actually beer, when we tried it, was much too bitter for our taste, but the name sounded sophisticated.) To my left and still dressed for church in a Peter Thompson sailor suit stands Hump Jones, at my shoulder is Ed Bonnell, and towering above us one of the older Davison boys; beyond him Ford Birchell, Peanuts Stewart, and Bill Studderford. I can't remember posing for this shot; what I do remember is how brown we were, and how the tan showed in the bathhouse mirror when we stripped off our suits. I can remember the smell of the sea breeze, and I can tell from the surf in the background that this was one of those days when you had to dive in *under* the breakers or otherwise they would roll you right up the beach.

Our bathing suits were two-piece with the shirt worn outside to show its gay banded bottom, and my trunks always gave me trouble. If I knotted the strings too tight, they cut into my waist, and I'd have to spend furious minutes struggling with the wet knot. If I tied them comfortably, there was always the danger that they would slip down. When this happened, I would clutch them up, turn my back on the giggling spectators, and stagger back into the deeper water to re-dress in decency. Was there ever such a feeling of well-being as surged through us after that hour of sand, sun, and salt water? It opened every pore: you carried the salt with you, flecks of it to be felt in your eyebrows and on your arms; you were totally relaxed, and so ravenous that you could hardly wait for the Sunday dessert of fresh peach ice cream and chocolate layer cake. The chocolate icing had bite to it and was chewy even in the layers.

These browning photographs were taken on a Sunday when the men were more plentiful, and in one group I see the collegians who were my heroes, Collie Bergwin, Rufford Franklin, Joe Rowland, and Buck Bayne. They wore dark blue sleeveless jerseys, blue flannel trunks with a button-down pocket, and white canvas belts with a metal buckle. The broader the shoulders the thinner seemed the straps, and on the shirt over the heart was of course your fraternity pin. (The members of St. Anthony were said to hold the pin in their teeth when they took off their underwear.) This display of the pin was as modest as wearing your college numerals or your letter on your back with the sweater turned inside out. You didn't mean to boast about it, but the girls were supposed to notice and they did. So did the small fry.

A Sunday morning at Bay Head half a century ago really began with the church service. The bells began calling at 10:15, and dressed in your summer's best with Mother with her parasol and Dad with his polka dot tie, you went crunching along the sandy walk to the Episcopal church trying to keep the dust off your newly polished shoes. I remember the varnished interior, the sunlight streaming through the half-opened windows, and the fresh cut summer flowers on the altar. The minister who came from Newark trimmed his sermon to fifteen minutes; he was thought to wear his bathing suit under his surplice and was the first man of the congregation in the surf when the service was over.

The ladies of course took longer for they dressed to bathe in those days. My mother, who was one of the slimmest, had a black silk costume with a white sailor collar and an ample skirt, black silk stockings, and black satin bathing slippers. Underneath of course she wore a corset, and underneath that a black shirt. Mother weighed less than a hundred pounds when wet and she was once repri-

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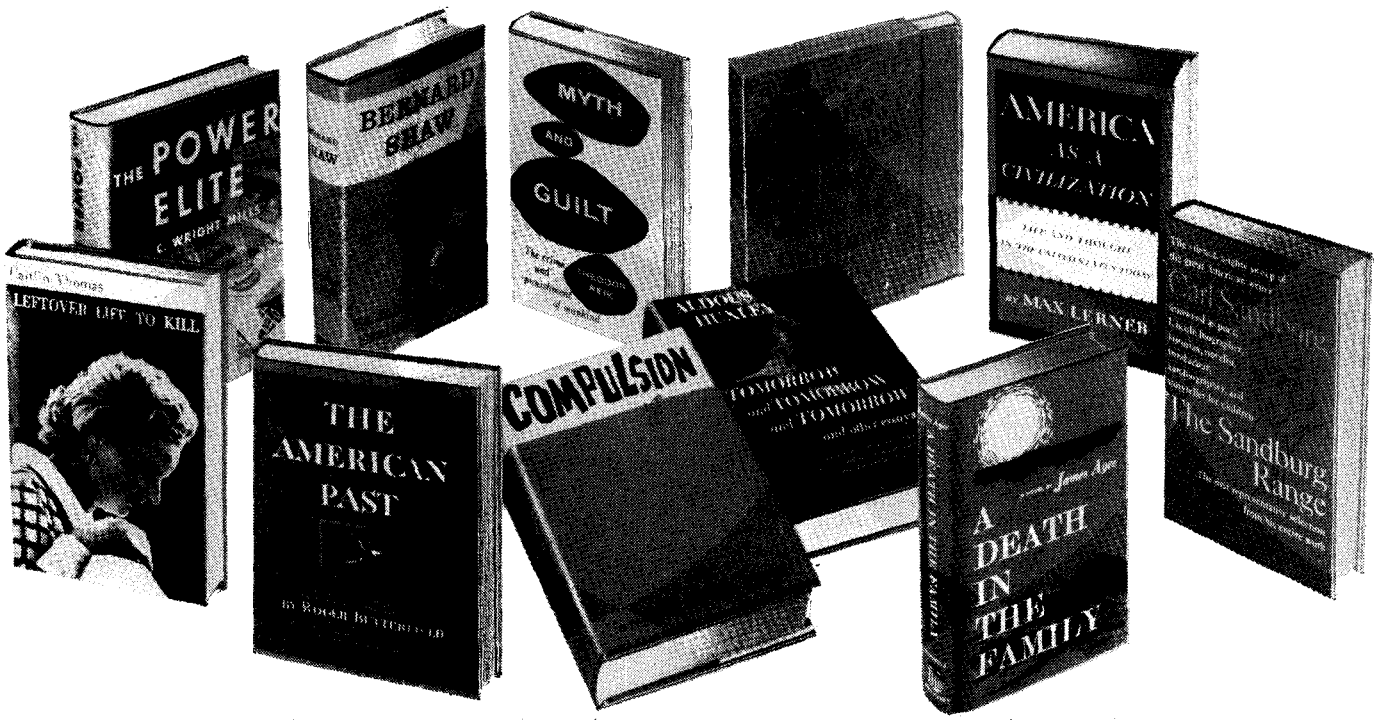

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manded by her older sister, my Aunt Margaret, for allowing herself to be photographed in the company of three friends, Mrs. Cattus, Mrs. Bonnell, and Mrs. Nimick, whose combined bulk must have outweighed hers six to one. "Rica, don't you ever do that again on this beach," admonished Aunt Margaret. "You stood there looking like a black hatpin beside those ample friends of yours."

There were no cocktail parties in those days, but here on the boardwalk at Sunday noon would congregate the more debonair of the elders and chief among them Johnny Montgomery. He wore shoes of white soft buckskin, white flannels immaculate, a double-breasted coat of blue serge with a knot of bachelor buttons in the lapel, tie and hatband of his old club at Princeton. Johnny — "Mr. Montgomery" to us — would stand there surveying the scene and letting off comments. He used to have fun with my uncle, Jamie Brewster, and he was always amused at watching the Nimicks. The Nimicks had the most capacious and hospitable cottage on the water front and they filled it well, what with their eight children and their guests. The Nimicks were big people, big in heart, big in heft. "When the Nimicks go bathing in a body," Johnny would remark, "the sea level rises by a foot."

After dinner the entire village would make for the yacht club. With luck, I would be included with the grown-ups, in the capacious cockpit of Harry Buxton's *Pastime*. She was the fastest catboat on the bay, and when her big canvas filled and she heeled over, you felt the greyhound in her come to life. To a nine-year-old a party means food. I knew that there were bottles of grape juice and sarsparilla in the *Pastime's* icebox; I knew that Mother had brought along a basket of Helma's crisp French doughnuts; and I had seen — who could miss it — that tartan box of Huyler's Scotch kisses. Appetite was a sweet thing in those days, and when we were becalmed at sundown I knew there would be eats and singing, too, with Mother's clear soprano leading the rest. We'd be late, but who cared? We were living for the fun of it.

WRITER AND READER

Those of us who are older than the century were brought up in a time of innocence and security when a family's participation in pleasure, even on the Sabbath, was a natural part of the American birthright. This has not always been so, as VAN WYCK BROOKS reminds us in one of the liveliest of the observations which compose his new book, FROM A WRITER'S NOTEBOOK (Dutton, $3.00). "I am the less inclined to like the idea of original sin because it was once the dominant idea in America and because our literature had its real beginning when we got rid of this idea. . . . Emerson said that all thoughts were 'directed on death' in his childhood and all the terrors of theology were employed to reinforce them. Children were 'little fallen wretches,' they were 'shapen in iniquity,' they were victims of 'total depravity' and 'more hateful than vipers'; and theology, as Channing said, laboured without ceasing to crush the will of mankind to believe in itself."

This is a volume of table talk, witty and stimulating; it reflects the wide reading and personal probing of our foremost literary historian, and as good criticism should, it enjoins the reader to match his experience and judgment with that of the critic. I have marked a score of passages for cogitation: I applaud Mr. Brooks when he rails at the sloppy usage of the American language and at the "anything goes" school of teaching; I reconsider when he attributes the "dimness" of modern poets to Eliot's teaching. "Eliot has taught them that it is better to be a good minor poet than a bad major one, a notion that, on the face of it, is obviously true." I delight in his description of Swinburne taking a walk up Putney Hill and pausing to kiss the toes of a baby in a pram; and I come to a forceable halt when I see this red lantern in the road: "There is no stopping the world's tendency to throw off imposed restraints, the religious authority that is based on the ignorance of the many, the political authority that is based on the knowledge of the few. The time is coming when there will be nothing to restrain men except what they find in their own bosoms; and what hope is there for us then unless it is true that, freed from fear, men are naturally predisposed to be upright and just?"

SECOND THOUGHTS

As I rode circuit through the mid-West in early December, I had time to reread *By Love Possessed* and to compare my impressions with those of other readers. There is no doubt that people respond to the power of the characterization; to the mood of intimacy which Mr. Cozzens maintains, and to the skill with which the lives have been interwoven. The big scenes stand clear in mind: Clarissa undressing after her swim, Julius confiding in Arthur, the descriptions of the Ponemah Oak, the lion at bay in old Noah, Arthur's excruciating interview with Mrs. Pratt in the garden, a comedy of champagne dryness. Mr. Cozzens' assimilation of law and his management of Noah's peculations are remarkably accurate. But I could wish that his people had a little more fun in life. They have so little pleasure with the children and none at all with eating and drinking. Like Arthur Winner, Jr., all their lives seem drawn tense with responsi-

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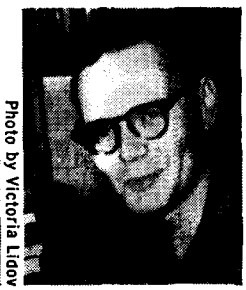

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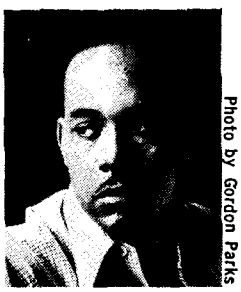
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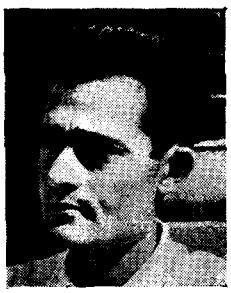

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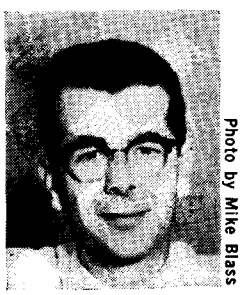
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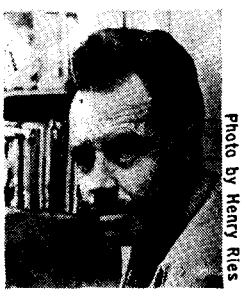
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bility and beset with error. I think there is too much litigious detail in the story and, for me, too much copulation; I am irritated by the repetition of "Arthur Winner"; and as I have said before, the author's addiction to parentheses and to qualification within qualification seems to me a hindrance. What kept me going was Mr. Cozzens' power to generate warmth and belief in people, a power which in its dimension reminds me of Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga.*

FIRST BLOOD

In my explorations of the early issues of the *Atlantic* I kept coming across references to President James Buchanan so furious that they made the paper scorch, but the reason for this denunciation I did not fully comprehend until I had finished reading FIRST BLOOD: THE STORY OF FORT SUMTER, by W. A. SWANBERG (Scribners, $5.95). What Mr. Swanberg has done is to build up for us in exciting, exasperating, and often pathetic detail the six months' prelude to the Civil War. The scenes are laid in Charleston, South Carolina, and in Washington, and the protagonists are the aging, vacillating President, the hot-headed Governor Pickens, and the cool, resolute Major Anderson whose unhappy job it was to defend the fort.

As a lame duck President whose party had just been defeated, Buchanan's remaining ambition was to ride out his term without any further trouble. He was tired, he liked the South, he knew how resentful Southerners were at the thought of Lincoln's inauguration, and by vacillating he hoped to maintain a truce until the Republicans took over. But the South Carolinians were too inflammatory. Urged on by such incendiaries as Robert Barnwell Rhett, owner of the Charleston *Mercury*, Judge A. G. McGrath, and the intemperate Governor Pickens, the little state caught fire; it would secede and having done so it could not tolerate the passive presence of a federal fort in its harbor. Day by day the fever in Charleston mounted. "South Carolina," said Judge Petigru, "is too small for a republic and too big for a lunatic asylum," but he was almost the lone defender of the Union in Charleston and no one was listening. Mrs. Chesnut's *Diary* which Mr. Swanberg quotes from so effectively was the truer temperature chart.

First Blood is a vivid and infuriating demonstration "that, in times of great national trial and excitement, so many men do go mad, so to speak, in a quiet and private way, that madness becomes a sort of epidemic." What makes the story infuriating, as Mr. Swanberg tells it, is the uncontrolled and shameful duplicity of Secretary of War Floyd and the ruffian skulduggery of Senator Lewis Wigfall. What gives it nobility is the vigilance and anguish of Major Anderson, an example of restraint which the historian has pieced together from the men who served under him and which finds its finest expression in Anderson's words on the day the crumbling ruins were restored to the Union, April 14, 1865.

A PARADOX IN CHAPS

"The American genius," writes Van Wyck Brooks, "to call it so, seems to possess a strong bent for admiring simple people and seeing in them what Emerson called 'gods in low disguises.' " One of our gods in low disguise is celebrated this year in THE CHARLES M. RUSSELL BOOK by HAROLD MCCRACKEN (Doubleday, $23.50). This is a handsome album containing thirty-five of Russell's paintings in full color, and over a hundred and eighty of his drawings, admirable halftones of his bronzes, and an endearing photograph of his wife Nancy, his mentor and chief salesman, taken in the Great Falls studio.

In the supporting biography, Mr. McCracken traces the hard and devious path which Charles M. Russell traveled on the way to the mastery of his art. There was extraordinary pioneering blood in Charlie's veins, and it was this which made him pass up the opportunity to work in the family business. Drawing and the sculpting of small animals came naturally to him, but he resisted all schooling, both military and art, and after the family had capitulated he followed his own star to the Montana Territory. For two years he lived with Jake Hoover, the trapper, sharpshooter, and prospector, and here in their cabin on the Judith River he learned his lessons of the West. He rode as a night wrangler in the spring roundup of 1882, a job that called for nerve, expecially in the rainy weather when the nights were black and the cattle restless. Men took to Kid Russell. They liked his stories and his heartiness, and what he drew or painted for them he usually gave away. He cared nothing for shooting, but a great deal about wildlife, and it was characteristic that the first drawings which brought him into national prominence were forced out of him by the terrible blizzards of '86 when the cattle were dying like flies.

For more than a decade this eccentric young saddle pounder saturated his senses with every aspect of the range, and here in these lovely reproductions we see what touched him most closely: sunlight in the early morning and in the fading dusk, the purple-brown of the sage, the thunder of the buffalo, the dignity and abjectness of the Indian, the ceaseless cruelty of the hunt, the wonderful agility of the bronco, and the slam of the six gun.

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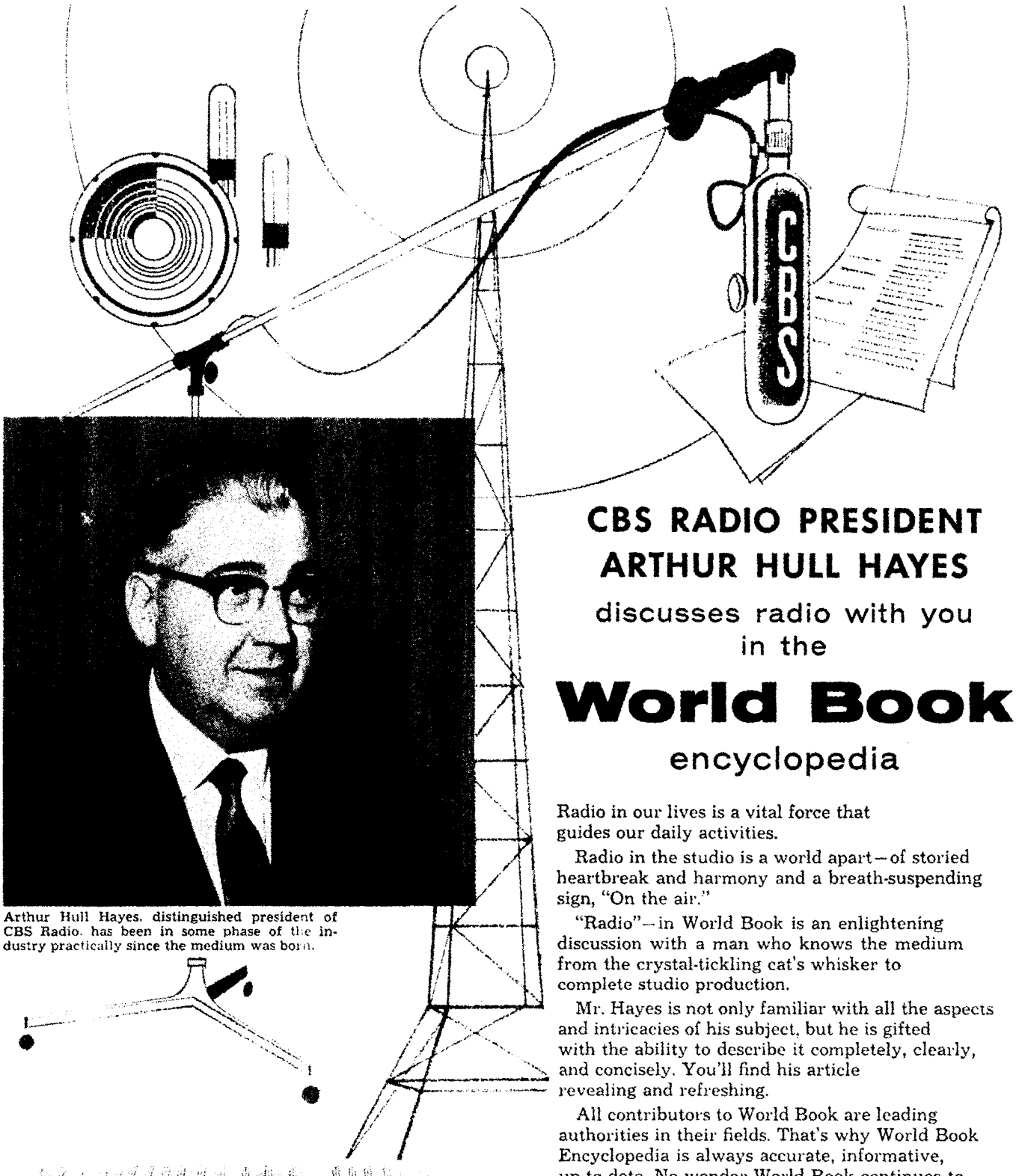

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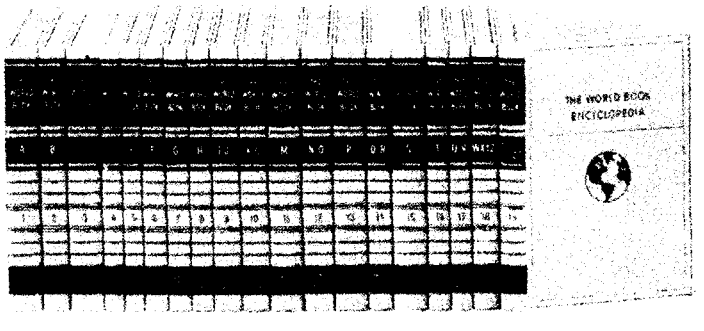

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Reader's Choice

BY CHARLES J. ROLO

Among the best minds and most sensitive spirits of our time, there is prevalent a syndrone which might be labeled, Hatred of the Age. This revulsion against a technological civilization dedicated to material achievement has been dramatized in an original and stirring way in the new novel by ROMAIN GARY, THE ROOTS OF HEAVEN (Simon and Schuster, $4.50). M. Gary belongs to that singular species — the artist-thinker-man of action — which includes Lawrence of Arabia, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, and Laurens Van der Post. A much-decorated flier in World War II and a career diplomat, Gary is the author of five novels, the first and the most recent of which have won important literary prizes in France. In *The Roots of Heaven*, he has poured the novel of ideas into the mold of the dramatic adventure story and has further vitalized it with an arresting cast of characters.

The setting is French Equatorial Africa, and the story recounts the strange campaign of an idealist named Morel to save the elephants from being hunted to extinction. Morel has spent the war years in a forced-labor camp in Germany, and during his ordeal his mind fastened upon the elephant as the greatest living image of freedom. He has come to believe that a world which eliminates elephants as an archaic luxury, an interference with roads and telegraph poles, will eventually find human rights an archaic interference with total efficiency, and will move toward complete dehumanization and slavery. After failing, at Fort Lamy, to obtain signatures for his petition to the government to ban elephant hunting, Morel takes to the bush to dramatize his cause by punishing hunters and ivory traders; and presently his crusade is front-page news throughout the world's press.

People see in the affair mostly what is in their own hearts and minds. To the colonial Governor and others like him, Morel's concern for elephants is a blind — he is merely a misanthrope crazily expressing his contempt for humanity; to a Dutch zoologist who has spent his life in the jungle, Morel is simply a man who loves elephants; to a retired English colonel, Morel is defending a characteristically English idea of decency — he is "an Englishman without knowing it." The newspapers, reflecting human fears of annihilation in the atomic age, make a hero of the would-be savior of elephants. Minna, the cashier-hostess at the Hotel du Tchadien, a pathetic German tart who has experienced every outrage, is drawn to Morel as an embodiment of the belief that there can be some beauty in life. Together with a former American officer, Minna finds her way to Morel in the jungle, where a strange company has gathered around him. It includes a Lebanese arms smuggler; a famous American photographer who has come in search of a scoop; and an ambitious African politician, Paris-educated and Moscow-oriented, who with the help of the anti-Western press is exploiting Morel's crusade as a demonstration against colonialism.

The adventures of this band dramatize the perennial problem of the idealist: that a noble cause has to be fought in the company of self-seeking and unscrupulous scoundrels. The novel throughout is as densely packed with ideas as with action. It is a rich and exciting work, compellingly readable.

THIS AMERICA

In the foreword to his massive (1036 pages) AMERICA AS A CIVILIZATION (Simon and Schuster, $10.00), MAX LERNER makes a remark which helps me to isolate his contribution to a subject about which there exists a library full of volumes. Speaking of his past efforts to write about the American experience, he observes: "Whenever I tried to chip off a fragment — on American government, on liberalism, on foreign policy, on morals — I found that it lost some of its mean-

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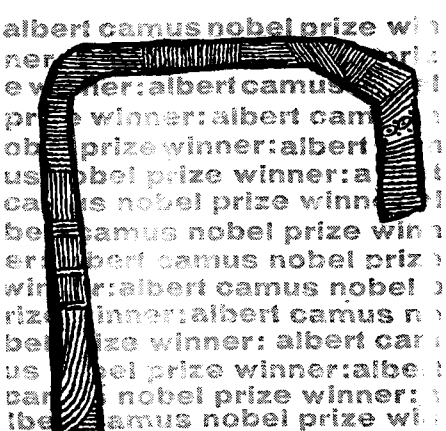

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ing. . . . In 1945 I finally overrode my hesitation and started the book on its present scale." This awareness that parts must be intimately related to one another and to the whole is the principle which informs Mr. Lerner's study and which is the source of its special achievement.

Merely to catalogue the areas discussed by Lerner would literally take pages. Inevitably this inclusiveness involves the inclusion of much that is familiar, but it has enabled Lerner to bring into relief the connections between the different aspects of American life and thought. Thus the workings and consequences of the business ethos are treated in a score of different contexts — politics, the rearing of children, crime, popular culture, and so on. The psychic problems of Americans are examined, as the book progresses, from a multiplicity of perspectives and are closely linked to the total social picture. This approach, with its emphasis on interrelatedness, involves a certain amount of repetition, but it pays large dividends in understanding.

Lerner explains that his purpose is neither to celebrate nor to indict the American way of life but to try to grasp "its pattern and inner meaning"; and he has stuck to his intentions. Whether he is examining big business or civil liberties, suburbia or the press, religion or courtship and love, his assessment is tolerant, judicious, eminently balanced — and well stocked with suggestive ideas.

Tolerance and balance, however, have their liabilities. Lerner is apt to confine himself tamely to split verdicts such as "If the career of the artist [in America] has its dangers, it also has its strengths," or else he winds up a critical passage on a note of optimism which the preceding analysis has not warranted. The discrepancy between analysis and conclusion is striking in a particularly significant area. Lerner finds American civilization a huge success, which from the standpoint of material achievement is incontestable. But the picture he draws of the personal lives of Americans heavily accents disappointment, neurotic tension, insecurity, and loneliness — in a word, unhappiness. He speaks of "the desensitizing and depersonalizing" of life in America by the "creeping imperialism of business"; of how the pursuit of status makes

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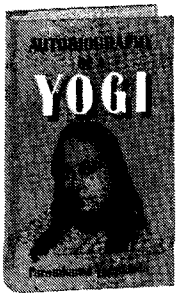

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life "a joyless and derivative affair, laden with endless anxieties"; of the individual's widespread loss of a sense of identity as a result of the insidious pressures of conformism; of the boredom, the emptiness, which cause Americans to feel they are "starving psychically amid psychic plenty." Lerner rightly emphasizes that many of these ills are bound up with the very dynamism of American life which, with its "oceanic sense of possibility," encourages exaggerated hopes and causes the individual to make excessive demands on himself. But to say this is merely to state the issue: Is our society as a whole paying, in human terms, a stultifying price for material success?

It would be misleading not to end these notes with a salute. Lerner's firm grasp of the many facets of so vast a subject as American civilization; the lucidity with which he has presented an encyclopedic range of information; the level of insight and of readability he sustains — all these add up to an achievement of remarkable dimensions.

A YOUNG GIRL'S DIARY

Reminiscences of youth are currently apt to fall within one of two schools, which might be labeled, respectively, "Look Back in Anger" and "Look Back in Langor." The former churns with self-pity. In the latter, the author's original experiences are soaked in the warm bath of an adult's sense of loss and emerge as misty images of themselves; youth, seen through a filter of arty sentimentality, becomes a state of chronic oversensitivity and delicate sadness. But THE DIARY OF "HELENA MORLEY" (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, $4.75) brings us the refreshing experience of encountering the laughter and tears of childhood in their original state. HELENA MORLEY is the pen name of a girl of English descent who lived in the remote Brazilian mining town of Diamantina sixty years ago. Her diary — kept when she was twelve to fifteen years old — was first published in Brazil in 1942, rapidly won literary recognition, and now has been admirably translated into English by Elizabeth Bishop. It reminds us that being young is a wonderful thing, that awareness is not inconsistent with high spirits, and that the gifted child is not necessarily the tortured one. Half a dozen such books would make it possible to speak of a renaissance of the unneurotic child.

Helena Morley is an extrovert — outspoken, good-natured, and gay; a bit of a show-off; always hungry (and often tempted to steal fruit); a natural storyteller. Although young writers are supposed to be poets, her talents are in the domain of gossip. She has a curiosity which enables her to say: "Every day we discover something new." Her diary is a lively collection of short short stories — about tensions and love among the numerous aunts and uncles; about birthday parties for cousins and wedding parties for slaves (at one there is even a melodramatic poisoning); about the grandfather who married off his daughters in pairs, and the ghostly thief who, rumor says, can turn himself into anything and especially likes to take the form of an ant heap.

We not only enjoy but we trust her perceptions. She can say of the father she clearly adores: "Papa lives in hope of finding diamond-bearing gravel, but it's hope, hope, hope, all his life long." She is skeptical of her mother's piety but is superstitious in a self-protective way: "I only like to pray when I'm sad or when there's a thunderstorm." At once innocent and shrewd, she says in her matter-of-fact way: "I'm not going to be so foolish as to make such a wonderful life into a life of suffering." And she leaves us assured that she will not.

FICTION CHRONICLE

FIRST LOVE AND OTHER SORROWS (Dial, $3.50) by HAROLD BRODKEY comes to us backed by tributes from Frank O'Connor, Mark Schorer, and John Cheever. That Mr. Brodkey is an unusually gifted new writer, with an attractive freshness of perception, a fine command of language, and an individual vein of humor — all this seems unmistakable. My reservation about his talent has to do with its scope: he appears to be the kind of artist committed to working in the minor key which the *New Yorker* has made fashionable. With him, it is principally the nuances of sensibility or the moment supercharged with feeling which counts.

The collection has a chronological sequence: it progresses from early

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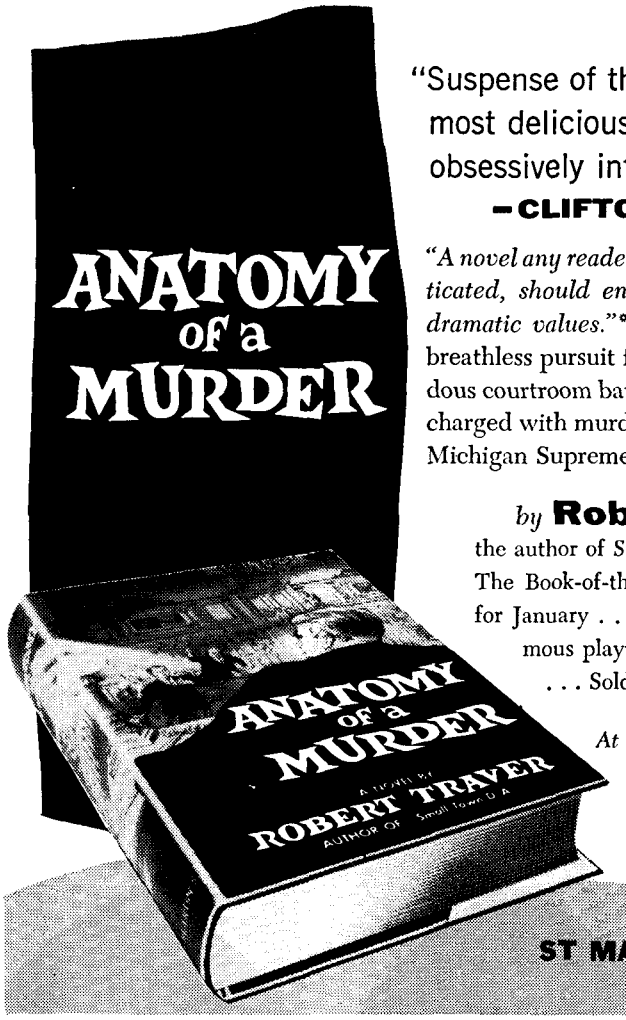
adolescence in St. Louis to experiences at Harvard, then focuses on a young married couple living in the suburbs of New York. The stronger stories are by and large the longer ones (the first four), in which the author's narrative gifts come into play. "Sentimental Education" — an account of a love affair between two young people at college taking their first dip into sensual waters — is surely the finest story on this theme that has appeared in many a year. "The Quarrel" traces a friendship between two very different undergraduates ("moulding each other, protecting each other from being ordinary") and its passage through heartbreaking hostility. "Laurie Dressing" (an item unrelated to the others) is a comic delight: it centers on a girl preparing for a date with a prospective fiancé and debating what personality to put on — she settles for "sullen juvenilia." As Mark Schorer so aptly puts it, Brodkey's writing has the stamp of the educated heart.

CORRUPTION (Atlantic–Little, Brown, $4.00) by NICHOLAS MOSLEY is a first novel from England in which a curious *mélange* of strains has produced a distinctly individual work: flawed, but splashed with brilliance. The first part traces, with Jamesian curvatures, the flowering of a Michael Arlenish heroine, Kate Lambourne, a wellborn and soon notorious beauty who appears to be mad and bad — "her specialty was scandal." She is the cousin of the narrator, who is desperately in love with her; and once in his adolescence, once some years later, she gives herself to him only to abandon him inexplicably.

In Part Two, the prose shifts into a rhythm which is startlingly Faulknerian (without Faulkner's obscurities), and the author suddenly displays a rich sense of comedy and a ferocious wit. He moves around London Bohemia, bringing into the story a wonderful character called Suzy: a doll at once infinitely demure and disreputable, who, each time she changes lover, is accompanied by a van loaded with her own enormous bed. This whole section is a tour de force — very funny, but serious and subtle in its perceptions.

Part Three carries the narrator to Venice with Suzy; and their involvement with Kate and her sinister Italian lover leads up to a dramatic denouement. Whatever the shifts



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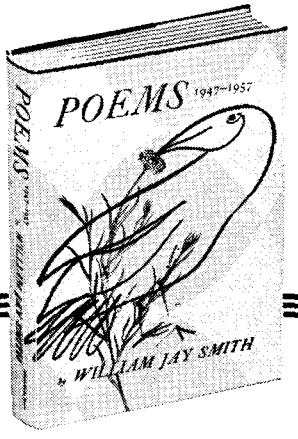

POEMS

1947-1957

by WILLIAM JAY SMITH

"He has proved again that the writing of light verse can be an art, that it can employ the resources of poetic imagination, that it can 'shock' and inspire the reader as well as entertain him."

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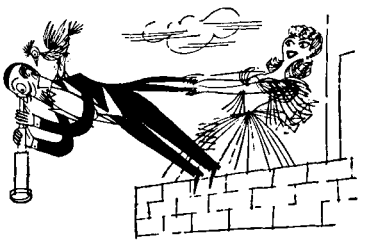
of tone and style, the novel sustains a strong current of intensity. All in all, it is an attractive and out-of-the-ordinary book.

THE SIBYL (Random House, $3.00) by PÄR LAGERKVIST, Swedish winner of the Nobel Prize in 1951, is, like his previous works, a complex parable clothed in a simple narrative and in language of crystalline clarity. A wanderer doomed to live forever in torment by an ancient curse — he once forbade a man bearing a cross on his way to the gallows to rest against his house — has come to Delphi to learn his destiny, and has been directed to an old priestess of the oracle, a once mighty sibyl who has sinned against her god. The priestess in turn tells him the story of her downfall — of how she, the immaculate bride of the deity, surrendered her virginity to a mortal man. And together the wanderer and the rejected sibyl meditate on the "riddle" of God, who appears to them "incomprehensible, inscrutable . . . both evil and good, both light and darkness." This in effect is Lagerkvist's portentous theme, and out of it he has fashioned a haunting work of art, as direct and uncomplicated on the surface as a fable for the young.

THE LIVING NOVEL (Macmillan, $4.50), a symposium edited by GRANVILLE HICKS, contests the belief which one hears voiced from time to time that the novel is dying. This belief can mean one of two things: 1) that the novel no longer deserves the attention of serious readers; 2) that there are no longer enough readers willing to give the serious novel the attention it deserves. The contributors to Mr. Hicks's symposium — among them are Saul Bellow, Ralph Ellison, Wright Morris, and Jessamyn West — reject the first proposition but complain about the second, which leaves it open to question whether the novel is still living in the style to which it has been accustomed. What the symposium does prove is that, however inhospitable the cultural climate may be, serious writers remain as passionately dedicated as ever to the art and craft of the novel. The essays which Mr. Hicks has assembled make remarkably spirited reading. They are personal enough to be strong in human interest, and together they add up to an eloquent statement of the enrichment that the novel brings to life.



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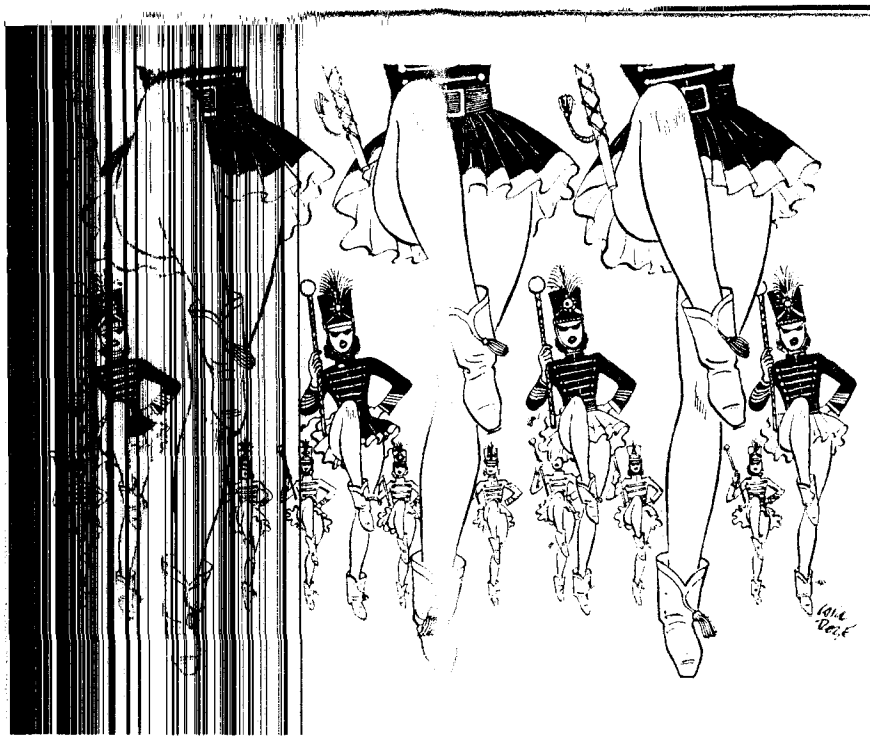

Accent on

A [illegible] leveling-off movement seems to have overtaken the drum majorette. Formerly unique, like a queen bee, the drum majorette was usually the only one of her sex on parade, sometimes with a handful of maidens or two but more often alone, strutting her stuff in the van of an all-male formation. There was a certain piquancy, no doubt, in the prancing ardors of the nymph in contrast with the paunchy gait of the fraternal or veterans' organizations in her wake; a high school band, shambling behind, served only to set off the vitality of her capers; the longer the route, the greater her triumph over the assorted trudgery of her followers. As one thus singled out for emphasis, the early drum majorette seemed to hold, ex officio, the status of campus queen, Miss Nirvana Heights High, and the toast of the regiment. All this quite naturally caused others in the school community to take thought.

Schoolgirls in great numbers decided that they too could become drum majorettes, given no more than the uniform, a good enough bleach, and a set of dental caps for that great big curb-to-curb smile. The schools of education, never reluctant to add a low I.Q. attraction to their bargain offerings, sensed a new opportunity, and the whole system began spewing out great quantities of drum majorettes and what the sports announcers choose to call "marching bands." A boom ensued in accessories; one finds formally catalogued today such ingredients of "band and school uniforms" as epaulettes, aiguillettes, shoulder knots, caps, shakos, braid, and, of course, the vestigial skirt. More toasts of the regiment are in production than there are regiments to toast them. Sometimes, between the halves of a football game in which hired athletes bounce one another about, it has seemed that there are more drum majorettes on the field than there are spectators in the stands.

The purpose of a high school education, one gathers, so far as these mettlesome girls are concerned, is to train them to perform during the intermissions of professional sports events and to march through the streets in department-store parades.

The activities of the drum majorette have proliferated along with her numbers. In her earlier days, high stepping in a parade seemed sufficient, but drum majorettes or their equivalent in the year just passed have appeared not only as baton twirlers but also as Scottish dancers, color guards (with muskets), hula dancers able to throw a baton high in the air and wiggle while catching it, and flag wavers in the manner of Siena's *alfieri*, the standard bearers who can wave their banners in intricate patterns and turn somersaults at the same time. Turning somersaults in any of these roles is well regarded. Individual performances are few where so many take part, but one child enlivened the intermission one Sunday last fall by twirling and tossing a baton that was giving off flames at each end, bringing from the TV sports announcer the comment, "Here's a drum majorette with flames on her baton, and that's the first time we've seen *that* one here at Yankee Stadium this season."

All these struttings and stampings and tossings represent a highly organized teaching effort, but the TV camera usually tries to omit any view of the coaches or parade managers or whatever they are called. It may well be that the middle-aged civilian, glimpsed briefly as he blows his whistle at the performers, is the principal of the school. (In Florida more than 60 per cent of all school principals are former athletic coaches who gained their credentials from a school of physical education.)

Just how the annual outlay for the chemistry lab stacks up with what is spent on trombones or boot tassels is probably not known by the good people of Nirvana Heights, but the school of education catalogue is beginning to include such course designations as "public performances" and "drill teams" along with well-established specialties like roller skating, storytelling, officiating volley ball, and bait casting.

"Public performances" by drum majorettes are still rather undevel-

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oped in their choreography. Marching and baton work are, of course, sensational, but attempts to inspire the girls with the spirit of the dance have yet to meet the ordinary standards of an off-to-Buffalo. The most recent routines seem to consist solely of causing the girls to shift from one foot to the other and kick, negligently, while doing so.

Here is training, then, that ought to keep the high school girl active and healthy; and while it won't qualify her as a physics major or a linguist, it might land her a job as a carhop or selling cigarettes in a night club.

From the television spectator's point of view, one doubts that the networks are quite aware of TV's flexibility. Those who actually attend the contest must sit there and take what comes at intermission. Why not a news show for the others?

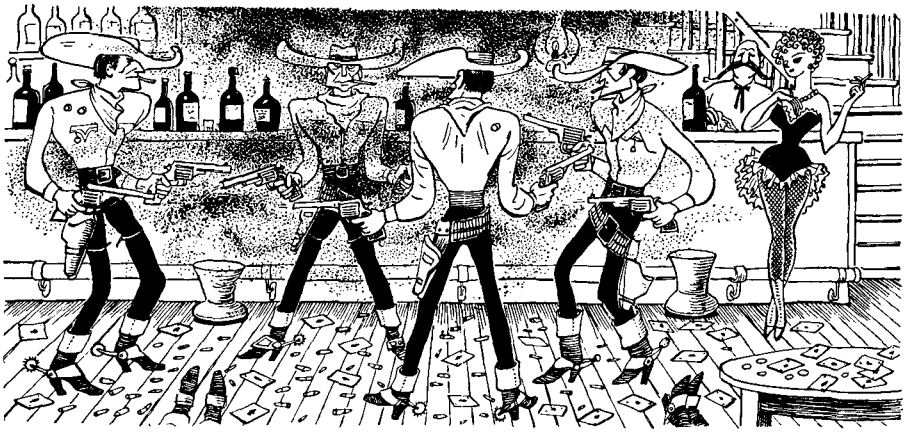
With more and more public school time available for the drill-team way of life, drum majorettes are now popping up in a kind of junior corps in the elementary grades. At one of the big Middle Western professional games last fall, some of the uniformed tots on display didn't look a day older than seven. Courses in how to teach the younger groups will naturally be added to the school of education catalogue, for it is well known in those circles that teaching baton twirling to a seven- or eight-year-old calls for techniques — skills, I mean — *quite* different from what is required with older children.

CHARLES W. MORTON

Westerns

BY ROBERT O. ERISMAN

ROBERT O. ERISMAN, *who lives in North Stonington, Connecticut, was 1957 judge of the Western Writers of America short-story contest, with the result seen below.*



Shawn helled into town along about sundown, put his strawberry roan apaloosa gelding at the Dirty Dog rack, and called for a double whisky while the honkatonkery's batwings were still squeaking on their ancient hinges.

Taking a neatly folded square of paper from his breast pocket, he reread it.

"How many times is that you've reread that note from your bedridden father, calling for help?" the barkeep ingratiated, forgetting his baldness for the moment and wiping the bar again.

"Will you quit wipin' that bar?" the edgy young gun-exile grated, nerve ends of irritation playing along one jaw muscle like summer lightning in the Tetons. "It's the hundredth time I've reread it," he added a moment later.

"What did your father do, Denny, call you back to home range, after you'd been sowing your wild oats south of the border for two long years?" the 'keep inquired mildly.

"That's right," young Shawn said.

Then he saw Rio Reeter. He had a mouthful of double whisky, and he blew it all over the rheumatic, silver-thatched muleskinner who was latched onto the bar beside him.

"Who is *that?*" he demanded of the bartender, eyes bugging.

The apron wiped the bar before he replied.

"That's Judge Reeter's daughter, Rio," the barrie supplied mildly. "She's been singin' here ever sence she went bad. She's a lovely percentage girl now."

"*Oh no you don't.*" The voice had come from behind young Denny Shawn, and an icy finger ran up his spine and a drop of cold sweat slithered down his side from his armpit and his palms felt clammy and there was a tightness in his chest and a taste in his mouth like the red plush upholstery of a smoking car.

The 'keep said, "That's young Matt Matthews behind you, Denny, come home to side his kin against the cattle barons. He's been in love with Miss Reeter ever sence he was knee-high."

The young newcomer kept his long-muzzled Colt .45 leveled on young Denny Shawn's back while with his free hand he fished a sack of Durham out of his breast pocket and pulled the drawstring on it with strong white teeth. One of his eyes was a sliver of steel and the other was a chip of ice.

"I'll be walking around town at sundown," young Matt grated, building a quirley with the educated fingers of his free hand and tacking it to his lip, oblivious of the loose ends of tobacco.

"It's sundown now," young Denny said back over his shoulder.

"All right, sundown tomorrow night then."

"How 'bout sundown the following night, 'cause I'm figurin' on walkin' around town tomorrow night with young Dode Barker."

"What, is he back already? I thought young Dode had a rendezvous with death at railhead."

"He received a telegram calling for help before he had made it halfway out of the county. I saw him last night rereading it for the hundredth time."

"No kiddin'."

"*Billy!*" the balding barkeeper greeted, beaming at the tall, slim-waisted young cowpoke who at that moment had stepped grinning through a rear window, both hands filled with Smith and Wesson .38s.

"Received a message up in Donner Pass where I was winterkilling my last gather of white-faced longhorns," the young newcomer supplied.

"What was it, a call for help?" the middle-aged apron inquired, his grin changing to a frown.

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"Wow, catch that décolletage!" young Billy rumbled, his blue eyes having lighted on Rio Reeter's full breasts and having noticed the manner in which they were struggling against the scant material of their confining vestments. (The son of a wealthy cattleman, Billy Carter had been East to college and was planning to sow his wild oats any day now.)

With the muzzle of one of his irons, he poked the brim of his cream-colored Stetson, to tip it back off an unruly shock of curly blond hair, revealing that he was a towhead.

"I'm callin' yore hand, fella!" young Matt Matthews barked at young Billy. "*Fill yore fist!*"

"Both of his fists are already filled," the balding apron supplied warningly.

"Why don't you walk around town tomorrow at sundown?" young Denny Shawn suggested.

Young Matt whirled on him. "You know I'm all filled up until next Thursday!"

"What's wrong with high noon then?" young Carter insinuated coolly.

The sun was directly overhead, the following day, when the kid rode in and stepped down at the livery.

"Grain him and then give him a good rubdown with old burlap potato sacks," he said, handing the reins of his animal, or mount, to the silver-thatched hostler. "He's a blown horse."

The leathery-skinned old-timer ran experienced, gnarled finger tips along the sweat-soaked sorrel's fibula.

"He's foam-flecked, too," the gray-beard mused, his mind seeming suddenly to be far off with some distant memory — perhaps of fond Indian wars, or of two thousand head of longhorn cattle stampeding and plunging over a two-thousand-foot drop-off to their deaths. On the rocks below.

The kid high-heeled it for fifty feet along the boardwalk, then crossed diagonally to The Silver Queen, which was directly opposite The Devil's Dream, after which two very popular Ward's Cakes were named in later years. The dust in the street was an inch deep.

"You can't hardly set foot in one of these trail-town main streets without the inch-deep dust spurting up in little puffs around your boot heels," the kid muttered half aloud, half to himself. He also noted instinctively that the street was deserted.

And then it happened. One moment the only sound along the street was the raspy buzz of a bottle fly against the dirty Wells Fargo office window, the next moment the town was exploding in gun flame. The kid's first realization of this came when he felt his nostrils contract against the acrid odor of powder-smoke. The next thing he knew he was down in the inch-deep dust, with ten bullets in his shoulder.

"You could have took three or four bullets in your shoulder, but no man can walk away from ten," the medico said when the kid came to a half hour later, starting to draw a sheet over the prone youngster.

"What happened, doc?" the kid husked, momentarily staying the impatient sawbones' professional gesture.

"It was bound to happen sooner or later," the medico explained: "There were just too many of you trigger-itchy kids walking around the town at the same time. The whole trouble was, fourteen of you from this area, actual count, had all received a call for help at the same time, a letter or a telegram or a message pleading with you to come back at once from wherever you were sowing your wild oats, there was trouble on the home range, bad trouble."

"What happened to young Shawn and young Matthews and young Barker and young Carter, doc?"

The medico raised bushy eyebrows. "I didn't know you knew them, son."

"I didn't, but the reader will want to know."

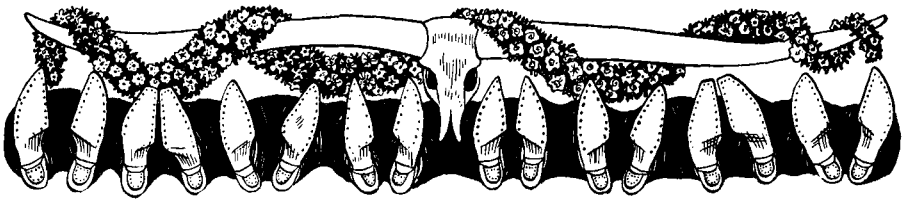
"Dead. All dead."

"Too many bullets in the shoulders?"

The kindly sawbones nodded. Then he said, "But you'd best tell me your name, son, or otherwise we'll have to bury you in an unmarked grave."

Unfortunately, though, a froth was already forming on the kid's lips. The medico completed covering what had been little more than a boy, then on second thought reached down and lifted a corner of the sheet.

"Well, he died with his boots on, anyway," the silver-thatched sawbones intoned.



FORGOTTEN LIGHT

BY R. G. EVERSON

As a child, I feared the dark;
coming home alone
tonight, I'm reconciled.

Entering my room, why bother
grasping for light?
when I shall sleep so soon.

There's brightness under that
closet door!
In this familiar dark
I am appalled by light.

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FEW THINGS UNNERVE ME LIKE PEOPLE WHO SERVE ME

BY C. S. JENNISON

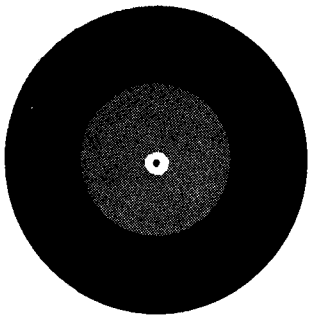
There's a high white count in what I call my sporting blood.
I'm scared of dentists, Ferris wheels, and gin.
I don't trust trucks with trailers, dim saloons that sell to sailors,
Bargain hamburg, or the state the world is in.
But though I'm scared of cities and of Ways and Means Committees,
Of spiders, snakes, and heights, and elevators . . .
I'm more afraid of waiters,
Beauty parlor operators,
And those restless chestless men called decorators.

In smart cafés where highbrows sup and waiters with their eyebrows up
Bring menus like my old Petit Larousse,
My plans for tea and salad seem more pitiful than valid,
So I buy the works from vichyssoise to mousse.
Though I will order pheasant if the waiters look unpleasant,
In vain are all the smiles I shyly slip them.
Their faces just get tauter, till, of course, I spill my water,
And there's nothing left to do but overtip them.

As for the bleached and brittle girls who coif my hair in little curls
Each time I ask them please to make it straighter,
In cozy booths of black and chrome, I sadly watch them hack and comb,
Doing some hairdo I must undo later.
The lowliest beauticians fill me full of inhibitions
And quickly make it plain I'm only trash to them.
They treat me like a ne'er-do-well; they never do my hairdo well,
And — powerless — I keep on handing cash to them.

The same thing happens in a store where trousered Divas of Décor
Approach me like I should have worn my sables.
My ego's so unbolstery, I bump into upholstery
And knock the quilted chintzes off the tables.
The breezy boys who agonize and flit about like dragonflies
Deplore my tastes in voices so imperial,
I know to ask for denim would arouse their lasting venom,
So I end up buying twenty-buck material.

I'm scared of planes and trains when I go traveling.
I'm also scared I'll lose my ticket home.
And — though I've done it once or twice — I'm frightened when I use advice,
A diving board, or someone else's comb.
But more than clubs with missions, razors, Russians, politicians,
Or airy folk who call their mothers maters . . .
I'm scared of decorators,
Beauty parlor operators,
And that surly bunch of satyrs known as waiters.



Record Reviews

BY JOHN M. CONLY

The listener is warned. As these reviews were being written, the first commercial stereophonic disc came forth. Produced by Audio Fidelity Records, it offered on one side jazz by the Dukes of Dixieland, on the other railroad sounds. It was a publicity stunt, since no stereo pickup cartridges yet had come on the market. But it was also an omen. Within a year most of the recordings reviewed below (and those of the next few months) in conventional single-channel versions will also have been issued in compatible stereo. Therefore, people who foresee themselves equipping their living rooms for sonic 3-D should buy circumspectly now. This whole subject will be discussed at length next month in these pages.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2

Rafael Kubelik conducting Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; London LL-1699: 12"

In this happy and persuasive performance Kubelik stands up very well against his fearsome competition — Toscanini, Walter, Boult — but the overmastering merit of the disc lies in a combination of two other factors. The Vienna Philharmonic has the symphony built into its collective heart, and the London sound men have captured its beauties in enrapturing entirety.

Chopin: Sonata in B-flat Minor
Schumann: Carnaval

Sergei Rachmaninoff, piano; RCA Camden CAL-396: 12"

Camden titles this offering "The Art of Sergei Rachmaninoff, Vol I," so presumably more Rachmaninoff reprints are forthcoming, a splendid prospect. The sound on the reprints is cleaner than that on the 78-rpm

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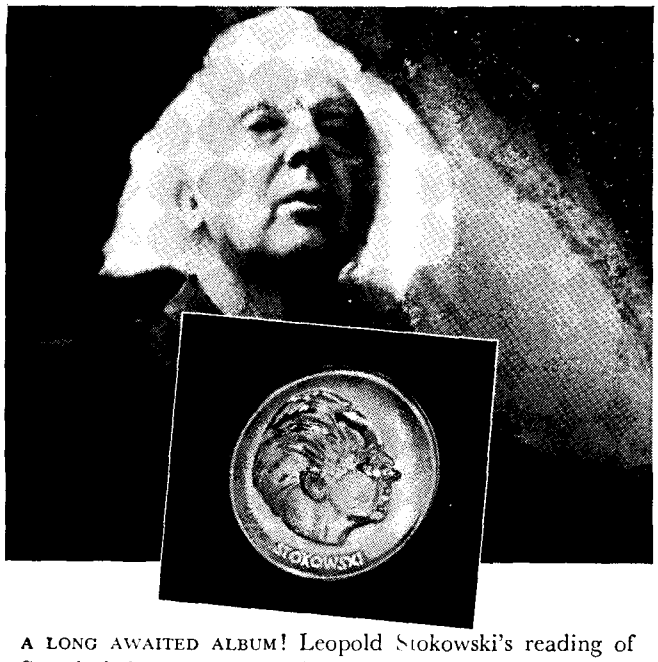
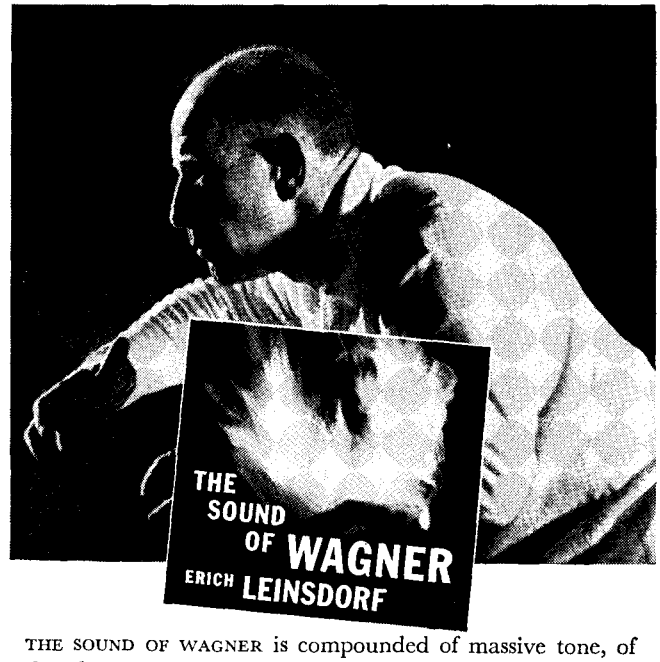
NEW...from the noted gentlemen below



A LONG AWAITED ALBUM! Leopold Stokowski's reading of Stravinsky's two greatest ballet scores—*The Firebird* and *Petrushka*—may well become the classic interpretation of these popular works. The Berlin Philharmonic again displays its ranking as one of the world's greatest orchestras.



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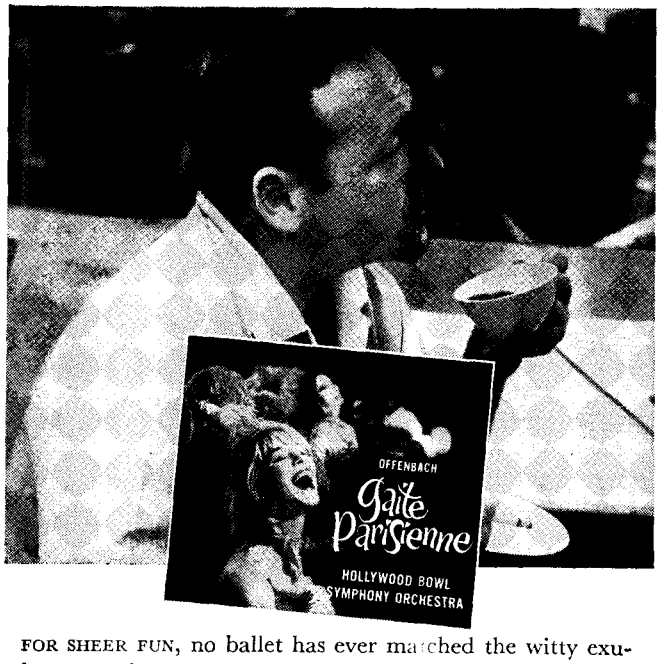

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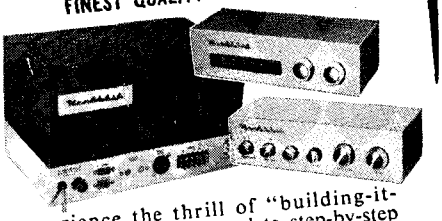

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originals (the Chopin, anyway), and the performances are, of course, something to marvel at. I don't suppose anyone else has invested the Chopin sonata, especially the funeral march movement, with such majesty, or made *Carnaval* dance with such supernatural nimbleness and gaiety. And the price is right: $1.96!

Haydn: Quartets in C, Op. 74, No. 1, and in G, Op. 77, No. 1

Juilliard String Quartet; RCA Victor LM-2168: 12"

The C Major quartet is one that the Schneider Quartet, in its protracted endeavor for the Haydn Society, failed to get on discs before the project collapsed. This is its first appearance on LP. The Juilliard men play it with fine taste and verve and, of course, high technical proficiency. The same applies to the overside. The G Major exists in several recorded versions, and some are as well played as this, but none is as well recorded. The music has great appeal.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 3; Havanaise; Introduction and Rondo Capricioso

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Jean Fournet conducting Lamoureux Concert Orchestra; Epic LC-3399: 12"

J. B. Priestley, who has eloquently voiced displeasure over the disappearance of illuminated fountains, should buy this record and play it with his eyes closed. Such tonal grace and luminescence are rarely encountered. Sumptuous is the word for the whole production.

Stravinsky: Agon; Canticum Sacrum

Igor Stravinsky conducting soloists, Los Angeles Festival Orchestra and Chorus; Columbia ML-5215: 12"

Apparently Shakespeare was right. Age does not necessarily wither. At seventy-five, Stravinsky delivers to us at least one and perhaps two authentic masterpieces (I have not yet quite absorbed the *Canticum:* a comment not intended as an impertinence, but merely as a listener's reaction). *Agon* is irresistible, just as were the *Rite*, the *Firebird*, and *Petrouchka*. It is a ballet score, with some little reminiscence of Rameau but unmistakably Stravinsky, even if not exactly any Stravinsky we have met before. This time he mixes his historicisms with twelve-tone techniques, and the result is right out of the world, pure fascination from start to finish. *Agon* means argument — here, I suppose, in the sense of the prologue to a Greek drama. Columbia's notes don't explain this, but no matter. I have seldom heard music that needed explanation less. The *Canticum* also has antique antecedents. It was composed for a celebration at St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice, and has trombones recalling the Gabrielis. The text is eclectically scriptural, and parts of the score are immediately moving. Others puzzle at first hearing. Never mind, you can always come back to it after listening to *Agon* again. The recorded sound is a miracle of brilliance and clarity.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4

Igor Markevitch conducting National Orchestra of the French Radio-Television Service; Angel 35446: 12"

After a few moments of this performance, the woman who keeps me alive looked up from her magazine and said, "Sounds like Toscanini." This was a perceptive comment. Toscanini never played the Tchaikovsky Fourth, but I am sure that if he had (before his very last years) this is very nearly the way he would have played it. Eschewing musical snobbery, Markevitch addresses Tchaikovsky as a *great* composer, not one easily to be "improved upon" by a conductor. His interpretation is in no way mechanical — it has great verve and lyricism — but his impulses stem from what the score says. The result is much life, much beauty, and obviously much coöperation from the orchestra. The reproduction is faithful in the discreet English manner.

Vivaldi: The Four Seasons

Antonio Janigro conducting I Solisti di Zagreb; Jan Tomasow, violin; Anton Heiller, harpsichord; Vanguard BG-564: 12"

Someone once compared Leslie Howard's acting to the ticking of a watch, in that he made you listen so closely he had you in his power. The Solisti di Zagreb employ something of the same technique, and have made it work beyond complaint with Bach and Mozart. With Vivaldi it works less well. If performers seek too hard for subtleties in the Red Priest's writing, they may vitiate its prime qualities: lustiness and verve. This seems to have happened here — in slight degree, but enough to make me prefer the Barchet-Reinhardt version on Vox. The sound of the

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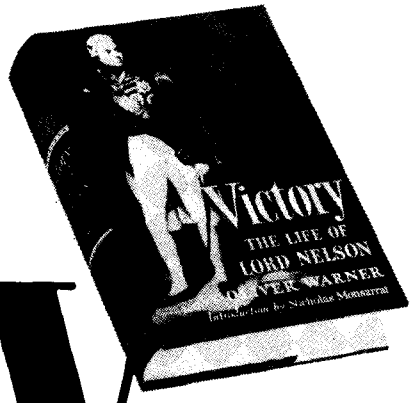

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Solisti at work, however, remains breathtaking.

Gershwin: Oh, Kay!
Barbara Ruick, Jack Cassidy, Allen Case, Roger White; Lehman Engel conducting chorus and orchestra; Columbia CL-1050: 12"
In 1926 Prohibition was in full swing, the Gershwin brothers were in their twenties, and Goddard Lieberson was just out of knee pants — a fact you would not deduce from his flavorful reconstruction of this Gershwin-Wodehouse musical of that year. Whether Columbia Records' president has captured historic authenticity in his restagings of songs like *Do Do Do; Maybe; Clap Yo' Hands;* and *Someone to Watch over Me* I do not know, but they certainly carry a very joyous conviction. And a lively Broadway atmosphere. Perhaps we shall see a revival of the show, as was the case when Lieberson retrieved *Pal Joey* on discs. Broadway, if I may say so, could use it right now.

Shakespeare: Hamlet
John Gielgud and the Old Vic Company; production by John Gielgud and John Richmond; RCA Victor LM-6404: four 12"
All that can be said about the Old Vic *Hamlet* is that there it is, and it is just what you would expect. The cuts are conventional and minimal. Everyone is competent and credible. Sir John's Hamlet is a somewhat oratorical young man, which doesn't bother me. The Prince is not, let's face it, a normal average boy, but a study in psychological stress. It does not matter how he is presented, so long as he is presented intelligently. There are no startling revelations in this performance, but Shakespeare comes through.

German University Songs
Erich Kunz, baritone; Anton Paulik conducting Vienna State Opera male chorus, orchestra; Vanguard VRS-1010: 12"
Never, I am sure, did any student chorus bring to these songs the fine massed finish furnished by these excellent Viennese opera singers. But there is plenty of gusto, too. On this disc — second of a series — the offerings include *Die Lorelei, Jucheidi* (which you and I sang as Up-i-dee, remember?), and *Treue Liebe.* In Volume III, I hope, we may get *Lore am Tore* and *Die Teutobergerschlacht.*

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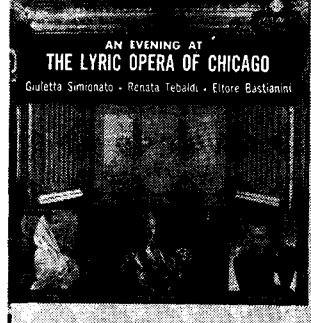

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AT HOME IN SCANDINAVIA

BY GILES PLAYFAIR

A few years ago, I was at London's Waterloo Station to see some friends off to New York. A middle-aged American asked me to direct him to the boat-train platform, which I did. On my way out I saw him again, looking very lost (I thought), and I assumed he got my directions confused and missed the train.

"Oh, no," he assured me. He wasn't due to leave for several days yet, but after a couple of weeks in London on his own he'd decided to take a look at the train on which he *would* eventually be leaving. He'd wanted, I gathered, to reassure himself that there was such a train; and it had also given him vicarious pleasure to see others started on their journey back to the United States. By way of demonstrating how eagerly he was looking forward to his own return, he showed me snapshots of his home and family in Ohio.

As a Briton, I remember feeling embarrassed that a visitor, especially one who had spent all the money necessary to cross the Atlantic, could be so wretchedly lonely in London. Though his was possibly an exceptional or exaggerated case, a sense of social isolation is, of course, a hazard of foreign travel even when the language is no barrier. I can imagine that many visitors who arrive in Britain knowing nobody leave days or weeks later without having met anybody outside of hotel porters and the like. For the problem of how to provide foreign visitors with suitable social contacts, of how to enable them to meet the people as well as see the sights, of how to give them some psychological understanding of the country as well as some physical knowledge of it, has not, so far as I'm aware, been a matter of official consideration in Britain.

It is a problem, I should think, that any country engaged in the tourist business would be both charitable and wise to consider. And in Scandinavia, where one is likely to come across more evidence of a progressive spirit than anywhere else in Europe, its handling has become a responsibility of national and private tourist agencies.

I say this after a recent journey on my own through the Scandinavian countries. Denmark was the initiator of current plans to safeguard the foreign visitor against loneliness, and appropriately I went there first.

I took the ship that sails daily during the summer months from Harwich to Esbjerg. That, incidentally, if the tourist can afford the time for it and England happens to be his starting point, makes a very pleasant overnight voyage. Though the ship is apt to be booked up, especially in August, it has sufficiently spacious accommodation to give the impression of not being at

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all crowded — a rare thing in these days of mass travel. The traveler gets an excellent four-course dinner aboard for just over a dollar a foretaste both of the delectability of the Scandinavian cuisine and of the reasonableness of prices in Scandinavia — particularly in Denmark — by comparison with those in most other parts of Europe.

The Danes are a patriotic, home-loving people, full of bonhomie but curiously modest. Talk to a Dane and the chances are he will soon be telling you that though there is no poverty in Denmark and life there is happy and abundant, his is a poor country without iron or other rich industrial resources. This same modesty is characteristic of official Danish travel literature, which sometimes seems to have an oddly self-denigrating tone. The fact is that though Denmark needs a thriving tourist trade for its economic welfare, it frankly does not believe it can have one merely because its countryside is pretty and dotted about with ancient castles or because Copenhagen, toward which the great majority of Denmark's foreign visitors gravitate, is a gay and handsome city, "the Paris of the North." In other words, so far as conventional tourist attractions go, Denmark does not feel well enough endowed to compete with Norway and Sweden, let alone with such veterans in the tourist business as France, Italy, and Switzerland.

Hence it has invented and developed an original selling policy of its own, a policy expressed in the slogan: "Life-seeing rather than sight-seeing." To judge from the facts that Denmark's tourist trade has quadrupled in the past ten years, that it is now at least abreast of Norway's and Sweden's, and that the country welcomed 100,000 American guests in 1956, this policy is proving highly successful. But obviously its practical effectiveness is dependent on the attitude of the Danish people. Conducted tours that take in visits to schools, factories, and farms can be and are made available. But they would hardly be attractive without the coöperation of individual Danes and Danish families.

There was never any attempt to enlist this coöperation officially or to propagandize it into existence with appeals to patriotism or self-interest. As a member of the National Tourist Association of Denmark put it to me, "We couldn't very well say to the people, 'smile, damn you, smile when you see a foreign visitor.' And anyhow, we didn't need to." For the Danes, evidently, are remarkably free of xenophobia or racial prejudice, and they are traditionally hospitable. It is a natural thing for them to smile at strangers and to talk to strangers uninhibitedly. Because they are proud of their way of living, they want others to know about it and

share in it. Moreover, the majority of them speak at least one language besides their own. This is likely to be English, since English is a compulsory part of their school education.

The traveler in Denmark may be sure that if he looks lost, say, and a passer-by volunteers assistance, or if, as happened to me, a chance acquaintance on a train offers him hospitality, these displays of friendliness are characteristic and quite spontaneous. Nevertheless, there are two programs run under the auspices of the National Tourist Association that in a sense make the coöperation of the Danish people in the life-seeing policy a more organized thing than it would otherwise be, though both of them were actually in operation before the policy was formulated.

One is known as "Room Service." If the traveler arrives in Copenhagen or any of the larger towns in Denmark without a hotel reservation, he needn't be afraid of finding nowhere to stay. He can go to the tourist information booth, in or near the main railroad station, and there within a half hour he will be fixed up with accommodation in a private house or apartment; with accommodation, what's more, that pretty well meets his own specifications, unless these are exceptionally demanding. He would certainly cause no dismay if he insisted, say, on being directed to a home where English was spoken or where his hostess would be willing to serve him breakfast.

In Copenhagen and its environs alone, 3500 homes are open to tourists. Among the families on the Room Service books all social classes are represented, with the exception of the few rich landowners left in Denmark, who still manage to live with a staff of servants in mansions or castles. The accommodation offered ranges from small, uncarpeted rooms, clean but primitive, at about sixty cents a night per person, to rooms with private bath, up to the standard of comfort in a luxury hotel, at just over two dollars.

Room Service was started before the war to supplement the inadequate hotel space in Copenhagen and elsewhere. That, basically, is the reason for its continuance, for though new hotels have been built and are being built, the supply has still not caught up with the demand. At the same time, such a large-scale and informal method of introducing tourists to private homes is, however fortuitously, a useful contribution to the life-seeing policy. Moreover, not all the householders with accommodation to offer join Room Service simply because they want to add to their incomes, even though the service is meant to be a strictly business proposition. They may join it as much for enjoyment as profit — for the fun of meeting people from other lands.

When the National Tourist Association makes an appeal for new subscribers, it invariably receives a few offers to provide lodging entirely free; and there have been instances of the foreign paying guests being invited to prolong their visits with-

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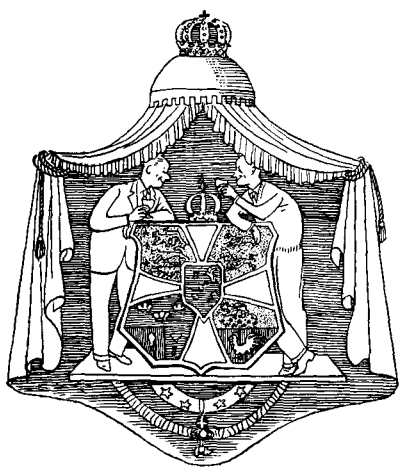
out charge. Danish hospitality to the stranger, in short, is apt to be irrepressible. So if a tourist applies to Room Service with the desire and expectation of being treated as impersonally in a private home as he would be in a hotel, he had better make that one of his specifications. The application must be made in person, by the way. The Room Service officers won't handle advance reservations.

The second organized contribution to the life-seeing policy that individual Danish families are making is entirely a labor of love. It is called "Meet the Danes," and under different names it has lately spread through all Scandinavia. Essentially it is an arrangement whereby every tourist can be certain of an appropriate social contact if he wants it —



and that one may well lead to others. The idea really started during the war when Danish families, at considerable peril to themselves, made a practice of giving harbor to parachutists who arrived surreptitiously to help rid the country of the Germans. After the liberation, a national committee was formed to organize private hospitality for Allied soldiers; later still, the work of this committee was taken over, and greatly developed, by the Tourist Association.

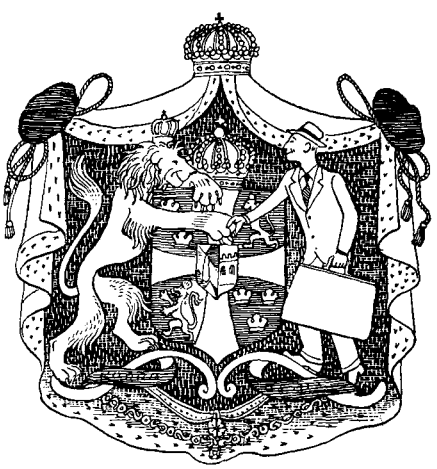
More than four hundred families are now registered with the association under the Meet the Danes program in Copenhagen, and during the high season (July and August) some of them are prepared to entertain tourists as often as once a week. If the tourist calls at the association's head office (it is next door to the railroad station) and applies for an invitation to a Danish home, the arrangement usually can be made for him within twenty-four hours, though, as in the case of Room Service, he can't make a reservation by writing ahead of time. He will be required to show his passport and also to fill in a form, stating his age, nationality, marital status, profession, and special interests. He will probably be warned against expecting a free meal, and he will certainly be discouraged from seeking an invitation primarily for that purpose. But otherwise he will not be given any advice unless he asks for it. If he inquires, for example, whether he should return the hospitality he receives, he will be told that there is no social obligation to do so; that it is a matter for him to decide, depending on the time he has available and the inclination he feels to develop the contact once made.

It is doubtlessly indicative of a difference between national temperaments that at the moment the Meet the Danes service is patronized more by Americans than British. For my part, I must confess that having applied for an invitation and received it, I was seized with considerable misgiving. A typed notice from the Tourist Association informed me that I was expected at 7:30 for after-dinner coffee at a private house in Klampenborg. Klampenborg, as I was to discover, is about twenty minutes by electric train from the center of Copenhagen; it is an attractive seaside suburb with a good beach and an amusement park second only to the famous Tivoli.

On my way, I reflected that to spend an evening with complete strangers was the last thing I'd willingly do in my own country, and I wondered why on earth I'd wanted to do it in a foreign one. The prospect of trying to make polite conversation with people whose command of the English language would probably be halting, who knew nothing about me, and about whom I knew nothing seemed highly embarrassing. As I approached the house, which happened to be guarded by a ferocious-sounding dog, I was wondering how soon, if the dog let me live, I could decently take my leave.

But my hostess was evidently practiced at dealing with strangers, timid or otherwise. She gave me a shouted greeting from her doorstep in impeccable English — it turned out that she had been to school in England — and immediately put me at my case. I was introduced to her grown-up children, a son and two daughters. The dog was called into the living room, and was immediately conciliated.

We sat down to coffee and one of those delicious home-made Danish cakes that seem to be chiefly composed of strawberries and thick cream. I was soon asking my hostess whether she didn't sometimes feel a bit apprehensive of admitting an unknown visitor to her home, for I had been toying with the perhaps melodramatic idea that the Meet the Danes program might provide criminals with a most convenient means of invading private houses. She assured me that though she had been participating in the program since 1952, and had lost count of all the guests she had received in that time, she had been burdened



with only one tiresome character. But with nearly all her other guests, she said, she had got along splendidly, and with a few of them she kept up a correspondence.

My hostess and her family went on to talk of other things: the new Danish Coalition Government (which they didn't like at all), taxation in Denmark (which they didn't like much, either), the training of children for the Royal Danish Ballet (which includes a general education), the subsidization of art and science in Denmark by the great Carlsberg brewery, the Americanization of the Danish kitchen since the war, the virtual classlessness of Danish society, and so on. I spoke of comparable things in England. It wasn't long before I lost any sense that we had met as casual strangers. I felt rather that we met as appointed representatives of friendly states. And I realized afterwards that at a meeting of this sort conversation is bound to flow easily, granted the least curiosity on either side about

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the others problems and customs. Moreover, it is most likely to end, as it did in this instance, in mutual assurances of good will.

Paradoxically, though the Meet the Danes program may have considerable potential value as a tourist

attraction, its charm lies in the fact that it wasn't designed and still isn't run as a commercial undertaking. Travel officials told me, and I'm sure sincerely, that it isn't in any way a "selling" device. They consider it a public service; a planned contribution to a better understanding between peoples.

The same may be said of the imitative programs that have been started in Sweden and — thus far in a smaller and more embryonic way — in Norway and Finland. The Swedes are on their mettle to make their program a success, for the Danes are privately skeptical of their ability to do so and the Swedes are perfectly well aware of this. The Danes consider that the Swedes are too introverted as a people, too stiff and formal ever to take kindly to the idea of throwing their homes open to foreign visitors.

Perhaps the Swedish version of the Meet the Danes program, which was begun two years ago under the auspices of the National Traffic Association, does seem a rather formal affair compared with the original. To begin with, there is the more ceremonious title — "The Swedes At Home." And this title is lived up to with a printed invitation card for the tourist when a contact has been arranged for him, instead of just a typed notice. The official brochure containing advice as to how a visitor should comport himself in a Swedish home has a grimly serious tone by comparison with that of a corresponding Danish publication, which is openly facetious. The tourist is instructed, for example, to arrive punctually, to thank his host and hostess immediately after a meal, and, preferably, to shake hands with them as well. He is given an especially detailed piece of advice about toasting: "The lady on your right will appreciate your toasting her. The glass is raised slightly from the table and on catching your partner's eye, smile, bow slightly to your lady, and then say 'skal.'"

But if this sort of thing appears to support the theory that the Swedes have a too forbidding national temperament to conduct a successful private hospitality-for-tourists scheme, the theory is fast being disproved in practice. A young and pretty Baroness is at present running the program on behalf of the Traffic Association, and running it very actively and lovingly. She has come up from the ranks, so to speak, for when the program was launched with a press and radio appeal for participants, she and her husband — a well-known musician — were among the first to volunteer.

Now there are as many Swedish homes in the Stockholm area for the entertainment of tourists as there are Danish homes in the Copenhagen area. The Baroness uses the hut-like little tourist information office in the central Kungsträdgården as her headquarters, and there she interviews personally every applicant for an invitation. Though he is required to fill in a form, just as he is in Copenhagen, the Baroness believes she can tell better from talking to him what sort of contact will prove the most socially rewarding both for him and his hosts.

She is extremely anxious that the evenings she arranges should go well; indeed, vicariously and sometimes very nervously, she is present at all of them, for she never fails to ring up next morning for a report. A successful evening she counts as one that leads to further meetings between the parties introduced, and by this standard she has known some failures, including a few really dire ones. The chief hazard she faces — and this is true with her colleagues in the other Scandinavian countries — is an overdeveloped sense of class consciousness on the part of a particular applicant. For class distinctions, whether based on birth

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or money, are not taken into consideration in running the hospitality-for-tourists programs. If the visitor is a millionaire, he is as likely to be sent to a humble home as a rich one.

The Baroness has had mostly successes. When I called on her she was feeling particularly pleased, because a contact she'd had some difficulty in arranging — it was for a young medical student from Ghana who wished to meet a doctor near his own age and interested in stamp collecting — had turned out very well. By contrast, apparently, I presented no problem at all. She said she knew exactly the people I should meet. It was only a question of finding out whether they were free to entertain me on the evening I'd specified.

Fortunately, they were; and promptly at eight o'clock I presented myself at their apartment in the center of Stockholm. At the Baroness' suggestion, I was armed with a box of candy as a small offering. My host showed me into a handsomely furnished living room lined with books, as many of them, I noticed, English as Swedish. He was a dentist, his wife a journalist. They were comparatively new recruits to The Swedes At Home, they told me. In fact, I was only their third visitor. Before me, they had entertained a dentist from New Jersey and a professor from California who had brought his mother with him. They were now looking forward to being called upon to receive some French or German visitors, for, as they said candidly, part of their purpose in joining the program had been for the agreeable opportunities it might give them to practice their foreign languages.

They apologized for having asked me to "light supper" rather than dinner. They had had to go out to a lunch party, they explained, and while servants had become a thing of the past in Sweden, except in the houses of the very rich, dinner was necessarily still such an elaborate affair whenever a guest was invited that they wouldn't have had time to prepare it. I could well believe this after I had partaken of the light supper, which wasn't exactly light from my point of view. It was preceded by martinis and accompanied by wine and consisted of generous servings of ham, salad, cheese, and raspberries and ice cream.

I should find it difficult to make comparisons between this experience of The Swedes At Home and my previous encounter with the Meet the Danes program without seeming invidious. But the evening passed no less easily and enjoyably for me than the other had, and if I was remiss in the observance of formalities supposedly expected of a guest in a Swedish house, I was certainly not made to feel so.

We were talking at one point about the liberalization of the monarchic institutions in Scandinavia. An example of this which had struck me is the fact that the Royal Palace in Stockholm is now open to the public except when the King is in residence, and that is rarely during the tourist season.

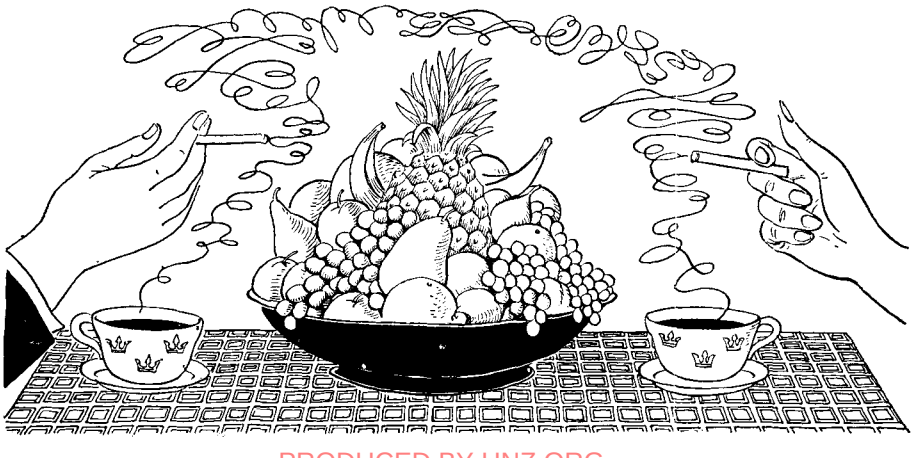
I remarked that it seemed to me quite impossible at the moment to conceive of anything of the sort happening in England; even the gardens of Buckingham Palace are still surrounded by a high wall with barbed wire and spikes on top. This reminded my hostess that there was to be an event at the Stockholm Palace in a short time — the swearing-in of a new minister of state by the King — which she had been assigned to cover for her newspaper. She suggested that I might like to go with her, so that I could see for myself how little pomp and ceremony royal occasions in Sweden have nowadays.

Unfortunately, I was due to leave Stockholm before that day, so I had to refuse. But it was an opportunity I much regretted missing, and one which obviously wouldn't have come my way at all if I hadn't applied to the Baroness for an invitation to a private home. Moreover, it was just the sort of opportunity that The Swedes At Home and kindred programs do produce when they work as they are intended to.

To my mind, the whole idea of private hospitality for tourists is such a manifestly good one that it seems bound to become increasingly popular, and I cannot help wondering how much traffic it will eventually be able to bear. Danish officials are a little apprehensive that the demand may become too heavy. The Baroness, on the other hand, believes that there is still plenty of room for expansion, and she is planning to widen her field of operations beyond the Stockholm area. (Hälsingborg already has a small Swedes At Home service, but this is independently run.)

I hope that the idea will never become too self-consciously a part or a prop of the life-seeing policy, and I am sure that if it did it would lose its present quality. Stopover visits to "typical Swedish homes" are now part of the luxury ten-day trip to Lapland and the midnight sun organized by the Swedish National Railways; a hotel in Geiranger, a beautiful Norwegian mountain resort, offers its clientele surprise visits to neighboring farms, where the occupants may be viewed in the midst of their daily chores.

These are just two indications that the commercial possibilities of the Danish life-seeing policy have not gone unheeded elsewhere in Scandinavia. But though it may be true that the friendly and public-spirited people who comprise the Meet the Danes and Know the Norwegians and Swedes At Home services are to some small extent helping to bring dollars and other desirable currencies into their countries, that was the last thing that prompted them to agree to entertain tourists and would be the least encouragement they could have to continue to do so.



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PERSPECTIVE OF

AN *Ilustrio* SUPPLEMENT

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AS BURMA SEES HERSELF

Perspective of Burma is the ninth in a series of supplements published from time to time by *The Atlantic Monthly* to foster among readers in the United States a broader understanding of the interests and the cultures of other countries.

For this *Perspective* a score of Burma's outstanding political and intellectual leaders have written on many different aspects of their country's present position and historical background. The main lines of Burma's cultural development were analyzed in group seminars held in Rangoon, and the resulting symposium has special significance as a comprehensive interpretation of an Asian culture by Asian writers for Western readers.

Badly devastated in the war, the Union of Burma achieved independence on January 4, 1948 — only to find that independence immediately threatened by a series of insurrections. The material in this collection reveals the courageous effort which the young country has made to insure her freedom and to rebuild herself as a modern and democratic nation.

Earlier supplements have been devoted to the Arab World, Brazil, Germany, Greece, Holland and Belgium, India, Indonesia, and Japan. They have been assembled in co-operation with the *Atlantic* editorial staff by Intercultural Publications Inc., a nonprofit corporation, supported by grants from The Ford Foundation. They represent one aspect of the Foundation's extensive international program which seeks to increase mutual understanding throughout the world.

The Atlantic Monthly

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PERSPECTIVE OF BURMA

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Cover Drawing by Randy Monk from a Burmese Tapestry

INTERCULTURAL PUBLICATIONS INC. (60 East 42nd Street, New York City 17). *Directors:* William J. Casey, Charles Garside, Joseph Hambuechen, H. J. Heinz II, Alfred A. Knopf, James Laughlin, Richard Weil, Jr. *President:* James Laughlin. *Vice-President:* Ronald Freelander.
EDITORS for this collection: U Myat Kyaw and James Laughlin.

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INTRODUCTION

by The Honorable U Kyaw Nyein

Deputy Prime Minister of the Union of Burma

BURMA is a small country of eighteen million people, sandwiched between the two subcontinents of India and China and sheltered by a ring of high mountain ranges. In spite of occasional unsuccessful Chinese invasions, it stood as an independent kingdom for two thousand years, until 1885 when it was annexed by the British. It was at the height of its prosperity under the Pagan dynasty in the eleventh century, and the magnificent monuments and pagodas of that period which still stand intact at Pagan are a living testimony to the glory that was Burma.

Warlike by nature, though peace-loving by religious upbringing, the ancient Burmese were small imperialists in their own way and periodically invaded their neighbors — Arakan, Siam, Assam, and even Yünnan. It was during their attack on Assam in 1852 that they clashed with the powerful British in India and eventually lost their freedom to them in 1885. This historical background is given to indicate that Burma, in spite of her fate as a British colony for a short period of half a century, has had an independent and proud past, with traditions and a civilization peculiarly her own.

When Burma was annexed by Britain, the Burmese peasants, ignorant and simple, became a prey in the hands of foreign moneylenders and absentee landlords. High administrative posts were held by the British, lower posts by Indians and Chinese; the Burmese were mainly clerks and menials. This pattern was repeated throughout the economy.

On the eve of World War II, the economic and social plight of the Burmese people had become worse. The peasants had lost three-fourths of their lands to a handful of absentee landlords, mostly British banks and Indians. What remained was under heavy mortgage. The export and import trade, the major industries such as oil, timber, and mining, were in the hands of foreigners. Even the professionals, the lawyers and doctors, were foreigners, and a continuous flow of Burmese university graduates found themselves without adequate careers. The country presented the picture of a social pyramid which had the millions of poor, ignorant, exploited Burmese as its base, and a few outsiders — British, Indian, and Chinese — as its apex.

In protest against such a situation the Burmese nationalists repeatedly but unsuccessfully rebelled against the British regime. The outbreak of the Second World War gave them another opportunity. The Burmese people rose up in arms against the British, then later on fought the Japanese when the latter did not keep their promise to bestow independence on the country. At the end of the war, the Burmese found themselves with a Resistance movement, whose strength, abetted by the anti-colonial principles of a Labour Government in England, led at last to real freedom.

Burma declared her independence in 1948 and chose to withdraw from the British Commonwealth, though retaining financial ties with the Sterling Bloc. But the whole country was in complete ruin, fought over twice by the Japanese and Allied armies, both of which had used "scorched-earth" strategy. Three-quarters of our towns and villages had been razed to the ground. The national income, small enough before the war, was reduced by half. Hospitals and schools were gone, oil fields destroyed, cattle slaughtered, and population decimated. Our people had hoped that with independence and the withdrawal of the British capitalists social and economic problems would be quickly solved. But they were soon to be disillusioned.

A constitution, democratic and parliamentary, enshrining the best and noblest principles of individual freedom and social justice, was solemnly proclaimed, and an independent government sworn in, under the leadership of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. This was the organization which had led the freedom movement against both the British and Japanese; it was a united front of nationalists, democratic socialists, Communists and various racial and ethnical minorities. The new government started its business in all seriousness.

But only three months passed before the Communists, who had collected weapons during the Resistance, made an armed rising. (Simultaneously there were Communist outbreaks in Malaya, Indonesia, and South India, all based on the decisions taken at the Asian Communists' meeting at Calcutta in February, 1948, which were in conformity with the "Zhdanov" line adopted by the Cominform.) The Burmese Cabinet was accused of being a stooge for Anglo-American capitalism and the old landlords. The Communists held before the peasants the promise of a new heaven and a new earth, where there would be no landlords and no moneylenders.

To make matters worse, the Communist rebellion was followed within a few months by another revolt — that of a militant minority of the Karens, one of the numerous different ethnic groups that make up the Union of Burma. These Karens wanted a state of their own and were pro-British. The tiny Burmese Army at that time consisted of only eleven bat-

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talions of which six were made up of Karens, all of which revolted, while two others were Communist-infiltrated. The whole country went under and the capital, Rangoon, was threatened. Very few people thought that the Government could survive. Yet somehow it did. Dauntlessly and desperately it fought for time to build up a new army, and to rally the people around it, convincing them that the alternatives to democracy were either a military or a Communist dictatorship, and that either would lead to chaos. By 1951, the back of the rebellion was broken.

It was at this moment that some stranded remnants of the Chinese Nationalist armies, numbering about twelve thousand, overran the Burmese frontier and joined forces with the Karen rebels. This gave the Communists a breathing space. But fortunately the Burmese Army was able to hold in check both the rebels and the Chinese, the latter finally being evacuated to Formosa under pressure from the United Nations.

By about 1952, the round had been won, and the enemy was defeated, though roaming bands of outlaws still needed mopping up. It will be asked, "How did the miracle happen? How did the democratic Government manage to survive? The answer may perhaps indicate a way to face similar situations, elsewhere. The Government attacked the problem on all fronts — military, political, social, and economic.

2

Politically, it rallied the people around nationalism and patriotism, convincing them that it was the Communists and Karens who were the stooges of foreign powers, and that it alone was fighting for full and real independence. It also educated them in the virtues of a democratic way of life, as well as the dangers of dictatorship. In order to train them in the practice of democracy, the Cabinet decentralized the administration and handed over local powers to elected representatives at all levels down to the smallest villages. Civil liberties were guaranteed and opposition political parties developed even though rebel remnants were a disturbing influence.

Once the back of the rebellion was broken, a liberal amnesty was declared and thousands of rebels who surrendered were rehabilitated. Some were recruited into labor battalions to prepare them for new and honorable careers. There were drastic land reforms: redistribution of lands from the hands of absentee landlords to the tillers; grant of loans on easy terms; formation of co-operatives for joint sale of crops and joint purchase of consumer goods; community development schemes which made primary and adult education available to peasants. In fact, the Government introduced the very reforms which the Communist rebels could promise only as a distant goal. The allegiance which had wavered gradually swung back to the Government.

The Government also knew that to maintain peace it needed the good will of its neighbors, and particularly of the great power blocs. Hence it developed the firm policies of benevolent neutrality and noninterference, of mediation between the power blocs, and of close co-operation with other neutrals, particularly the Colombo Plan countries, which are analyzed by Mr. Barrington in this collection.

Once the rebellion was quelled, economic development became a major concern. With the help of American consultant firms, an eight-year plan was drawn up, which was later converted into two four-year plans. Like other newly independent countries, Burma aspires to industrialize herself rapidly, and to make her economy more productive and independent. At the same time she must build more and modern schools and hospitals. The task has been truly formidable, due to limited resources, agricultural and other production crippled by war damage and the rebellion, shortage of technical skill and managerial know-how, and — a cruel blow — an abnormal fall in the world price of rice, our most important export.

Despite these difficulties, Burma still perseveres and plods along with the unrelenting will and cheerful self-confidence which never deserted her leaders even in hours of darkness. Agricultural production is steadily increasing. A modest industrial program is under way with a few textile mills, sugar mills, cement factories, breweries, jute mills, a pharmaceutical plant, and also a small steel mill, already working. We hope before too long to become self-sufficient in essential commodities. A country-wide electrification program with a national grid has been started, and a hydroelectric plant is already under construction. Many problems of management, cost accounting, and production still confront us, but they are not insurmountable. The oil fields are producing again, as are wolfram, lead, zinc, and other mines. Social services have not been neglected. Hospitals and schools are being opened every year, and education has been made free.

Our paramount problem is to find sufficient capital to develop the economy and to promote social welfare on a vast scale at the same time. This is where foreign business investment, United Nations technical assistance, and loans from rich countries can play a useful part. Our troubles are the teething troubles of a growing child — such as every newly independent country wishing to catch up with its modern neighbors in the community of nations must face boldly and cheerfully and perhaps, sometimes, grimly. Burma has not been lacking in courage, optimism, and seriousness of purpose. And, as I think the material in this collection will show, our effort is based in a rich and creative culture and sustained by a profound spirituality, which gives us strength for the tasks before us.

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THE PUBLIC WEAL

Excerpts from Speeches by The Honorable U Nu

Prime Minister of the Union of Burma

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(EDITOR'S NOTE: *Because Burma is telescoping into a few decades the social development which required generations in other countries, Prime Minister U Nu must be a teacher as well as a leader to his people. In these excerpts from speeches made in recent years we see the personal concern which U Nu takes in many different aspects of the people's life and the homely directness with which he instructs and encourages them. We can also see, by comparing "On the Three Evils" (1953) with "On Government in Business" (1957), how certain of his basic views have evolved in response to practical experience.*

ON THE THREE EVILS

(From a speech to the All-Burma Peasants Organization at Mandalay, May, 1953)

HUMANITY has been led astray by three evils — greed, hatred, and ignorance. Whether we are Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Animists, or Atheists, we cannot escape the three inevitables: old age, disease, and death. Nobody can deny that the five sense objects — pretty sight, delightful sound, fragrant smell, savory taste, and nice touch — are only fleeting phenomena. They are neither lasting nor permanent.

Nor can anybody deny that property is transitory: no one can carry away his property after death. Men have been chasing these transitory pleasures with a dogged tenacity mainly because they hold false views regarding property. They forget that this life is not even one millionth part of the whirlpool of Samsara (the cycles of rebirth), and go on amassing wealth even though it never brings them full satisfaction.

This insatiable greed for wealth results in the profit motive which is not directed toward any utilitarian purpose. Once upon a time all commodities were common property, and everybody had a right to use them for his own benefit. But with the advent of the profit motive these commodities became objects of exploitation. They became instruments of wealth and stimulus for greed. This led to the following phenomena:

1. Human society was split into two classes: Haves and Have-nots.

2. The Have-nots had to depend on the Haves for their living, and thus the evil system of exploitation of one class by another emerged.

3. With class exploitation, the poor became poorer because they could not get adequate returns for their work. They had to resort to evil ways like stealing, looting, and prostitution.

4. The Lord Buddha has taught us that there are four causes of death: kamma, frame of mind, weather, and food. Under the system of class exploitation, how can the Have-nots enjoy good food and protect themselves from extremes of weather?

Prime Minister U NU *was born in 1907 at Wakema in Myaungyma District. Educated at Myoma National Boys High School and the University of Rangoon, he began his political career as president of the University Students' Union. He became a leader of the nationalist Thakin movement and was jailed by the British during World War II. Released when the Japanese overran Burma, he served as Foreign Minister in Dr. Ba Maw's Government. After the reoccupation of Burma by the Allies, he was elected Vice-President of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League and Speaker of the Constituent Assembly. On the assassination of General Aung San in 1947, he became Prime Minister and successfully negotiated with the Attlee Government for the peaceful transfer of power. A forceful writer, U Nu has published short stories, novels, and plays.*

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Can there be any sense of happiness or contentment for them? Can even a good kamma favor one who is cheerless? Thus one who is born into the class of Have-nots is handicapped in all the above four factors, and disease is the inevitable result.

5. How can the Have-nots care for education with their hard struggle for a bare living? Lack of education breeds an ever-increasing band of ignoramuses and Mr. Zeros.

6. How can a country abounding in ignoramuses and Mr. Zeros ever progress?

It is evident that most of the evils in the world can be traced to the advent of the profit motive. Do you remember the legend of the Padaythabin (the tree of fulfillment) we heard as children?

According to the legend, there was once a time when men and women could get whatever they wanted from the Padaythabin tree. There was no problem of food or clothes or housing, and there was no crime. Disease was comparatively unknown. In course of time, however, the people fell victim to greed and spoiled the tree of fulfillment which eventually disappeared. Then a class of people who could not afford to eat well, dress well, or live well appeared, and crime became rampant.

Now I ask you to think of the Padaythabin as the natural wealth of our country, both above and under the ground. If only this natural wealth is used for the common good of mankind it will be inexhaustible, besides satisfying the needs of everybody. But greed comes in the way. The poorest of the poor wants to become rich; the rich want to become richer, and the process goes on ad infinitum. Spurred on by greed, people are apt to "botanize on their mothers' graves," so to say, in order to become richer. Thus the distribution of wealth becomes unequal. While some can amass wealth which cannot be spent in ten lives, others have to wallow in extreme poverty with bare rags on their bodies.

ON RICE AND THE PEOPLE'S HEALTH

(Extracts from a speech made in February, 1954)

You might well ask why the Government proposes to distribute vitamin tablets to the people of the country free. The reason is no other than our desire to replenish the lamentable food deficiency of the peoples of the Union. The death rate in Burma is the highest in the world. Even among those who live, 60 per cent are physical wrecks who have to be kept alive on all sorts of medicines and mixtures, like an old, leaky boat that is kept floating by repeated stuffings of the holes. . .

Yet our history books are filled with the wonderful physical exploits of our forefathers: Nyaung-u-bee, who could swim across the Irrawaddy both ways and run up the bank without any sign of exhaustion; Nga-htway-yu, who could climb a thousand toddy palms without rest; Nga-lone-let-phe, who could handle thirty pairs of oxen under yoke at one time — all these were sons of our soil. Why have those splendid human specimens disappeared and been replaced with so many emaciated wrecks and weaklings? There are, of course, several contributory factors, but experts agree that food is one of the main solutions to the whole problem of ill-health.

Our main food consists of rice and curry. Only a very small minority can afford to eat fowl or pork. The vast majority have to be content with *ngapi-htaung* (dried fish) and boiled vegetables for their curry. But the basis is rice, and both the Haves and Have-nots eat rice in a form which is far from nutritious. You must understand that the white grain of rice only serves the purpose of filling our stomachs. Nutrition we can get only out of the bran which forms a thin layer over the white kernel. By the normal process of milling, rice comes out with very little of the health-giving bran. Then before cooking, rice is usually washed about three times with water. And when it is boiled, the white liquid is again thrown away. Therefore the rice which is ready for the table is completely lacking in all nutritive qualities.

The rice eaten in olden days — in the days of Nyaung-u-bee and Nga-htway-yu — was prepared in a very different manner from what it is today. Then people ate pounded rice, which in Burmese is called "*maung-htaung*" or "*lone-dee.*" Only the husk was removed. The grain retained almost all the nutritious bran covering it. And in those days people cooked rice without throwing away the boiling liquid. The water used for cooking was just sufficient to soften the hard grain to make it palatable. Do you remember the story of how King Thalun once rebuked a woman whom he saw discarding the boiling liquid from the rice pot?

Nowadays, we are so used to eating only refined white rice we may find it rather hard to change over to "*lone-dee.*" I quite realize that. You see, while I was in prison under the British, I had to take "*lone-dee*" rice served in metal plates. The smell of bran and the brownish color of the rice were really nauseating at first. We kicked up a row and white rice was given instead. But we soon felt the difference in our health and had to ask for "*lone-dee*" again. Once we were accustomed to it, we found the smell of bran quite pleasant and far from repulsive. And in spite of the very strenuous work the prisoners were required to do, they kept wonderfully sturdy. The only explanation was the "*lone-dee*" rice. Those who obtained polished rice from outside developed beriberi. The wag who coined the well-known Burmese saying, "You are my only love; all else are bran and husk," betrayed ignorance of the priceless qualities of the bran. . . .

I am personally in favor of enacting legislation requiring the milling of "*lone-dee*" rice only, so that the people will have no other choice but to eat it. But I know there will be strong protests.

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I am, however, not afraid of such protests, because my measure will be in the public interest. It is like "forcibly lifting a man up to heaven, seizing him by the neck," as our Burmese saying goes.

I attempted to get the necessary legislation passed, but I found myself one against many. As you all know, "Lord Buddha could not prevail against the collective wish of the Sangha." The public should first be educated to the virtues of "*lone-dee*," I was told. Such proposals, of course, do not fit in with my temperament, as I have a weakness for quick decisions and immediate action. But for practical purposes I have to give in. . . .

We have determined to save the poor masses by all possible means. . . . The Government will purchase vitamins from foreign firms, while steps are being taken to set up state-owned plants which will manufacture these tablets by the million.

ON GOVERNMENT IN BUSINESS

(*From a speech on the new Four-Year Plan, June, 1957*)

In order to step up production in the economic field, the operation of all industrial and mining enterprises, except certain key projects, should not be entrusted solely to those who are only interested in getting salaries. They should be entrusted also to those who have profit motives.

If the Government continues to operate these enterprises, the salary-earners in charge of operations will go to their jobs as if going to picnics, without achieving results, like the Burmese proverb, "Maung Pon cannot yet play the harp although silk strings are no more." The result will be just squandering public funds.

From practical experience, I no longer like to see the Government's finger in all sorts of economic pies. If it is allowed to go on unchecked, then due to lack of proper supervision and efficient management, the state enterprises will sooner or later only line the pockets of thieves and pilferers. . . . In the circumstances, from now on, the Government will only concentrate on key economic projects.

As a second step, with a view to Union solidarity, facilities must be given to the people of the country — and especially to Government servants and workers in industrial factories — to buy shares in these enterprises. Such participation will encourage their interest in the stability of the Union.

ON NEGOTIATING WITH THE REBELS

(*Further extracts from the same speech*)

Since the insurgents are also among those who can help in the creation of a *Pyidawtha* (Happy Land) let me once again take this opportunity to beckon to them to come out of the darkness into light.

There has been, unfortunately, no perceptible progress in this matter of multicolored rebels coming into the light. As all of you are aware, they have rejected four offers of amnesty. In the last amnesty offer, in 1955, we even offered to legalize their political parties and allow them to contest in the general election if they wanted to, if only they would surrender their arms. But the rebels and their aboveground allies continue to press for a negotiated settlement. This would provide them with the breathing space they need so much and thereby pave the way for further rebellions. The Government is averse to the idea of any negotiation. The situation therefore is static. . . .

The so-called vendors of peace, such as the Peace Committee headed by Sayagi Thakin Kodaw Hmaing who are pressing for negotiation with the rebels, have, of course, no responsibilities. Their persistence reminds me of a notorious medicine man called Sayagi "Diamond Dagger" about whom I heard in my youth.

This *sayagi* would prescribe one standard medicine for all ills. One day a patient was given his famous medicine, but soon his son came running back to report, "Sir, my father is breathing hard." The *sayagi* told him to administer another dose, but half an hour later the boy was back again to say that his father was hot all over and having apoplectic fits. Another dose, and the father's jaws stuck and he became unconscious. Still the *sayagi* did not lose his composure and ordered another dose. When next the boy returned he was in tears and informed the *sayagi* that his father was dead. At this the *sayagi* turned his face upward, looked blankly at the ceiling for two minutes and in a slow drawl muttered, "That damned Diamond Dagger always acts like this."

Let us assume that we accept these peace vendors' offer of negotiation with the rebels, and then, at the earliest opportunity, the rebels once again go underground in accordance with their set policy and program. When the people go to these peace vendors and implore them, "*Sayagis*, the multicolored rebels have once again gone underground . . . please help us," what do you think these peace vendors will do? They will look blankly at the betel-leaf box and spittoon before them for two minutes and drawl in slow tones like "Diamond Dagger," "Those damned rebels always act like this." Beyond that, they are not capable of doing anything to protect the people against the rebels.

No, we are not in a position to accept such belated repentance. Steps must be taken to prevent the recurrence of such things. Delayed action on our part will amount to fixing the rebels' ropes around the necks of the people who have entrusted us with power. We will not, under any circumstances, acquiesce in such shameful surrender.

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PEOPLE OF THE GOLDEN LAND

Burmese Character and Customs

by DAW MI MI KHAING

1

That there should be a Burmese national character is not very remarkable. Our fields of green rice paddy, our broad rivers, the bare sands of the hot central plains, interspersed everywhere with the particular Burmese grouping of palms, low roofs, high monastery and higher pagoda spire — with always on the east and west horizons the line of blue hills — have produced their own inimitable synthesis of human characteristics.

To our neighbors in India, as far back as the times of the Buddha, Burma was known as "the golden land." And so it still seems to the Burmese today, who, as figures for emigration will prove, have no desire to live anywhere else. This national contentment has its roots in the facts of our geography, our religion, and our history.

Burma's geography is that of an abundant, warm, and well-watered land, where raising enough food for the population has never been difficult. Our religion is a form of Buddhism which tempers and moderates, and which, as it has evolved over the centuries, absorbing elements from several cultures, has come to provide a full range of activity for the many rather than a difficult mystic philosophy for the few. And the history of the Burmese has been that of a nation long victorious over all neighbors until a conquest by the British, which, after only some sixty years of colonial subjugation, was ended with apparent ease. These factors have made us relaxed and generous; neither fanatical nor preoccupied; proud, and in a great many ways unusually contented with ourselves.

The Burmese society of today has developed from about fifteen centuries of a rural, agricultural way of life in which the village, and within the village the family, were the controlling units. With us, family ties are always very strong — not so much from rigid traditions as from natural affections allowed full play. The components of a Burmese family are mirrored in the three ages which our Buddhist teaching apportions to a human being: the first of acquiring knowledge in a respectful attitude of receptiveness; the second of building up material resources for the proper discharge of social obligations; and the third of devotion to higher and more spiritual things. Thus in a typical family we would find the children being liberally admonished in intervals between extreme indulgence; the parents, usually both of them, working to support the home; and the old men and women giving much time to their prayer beads and placing the daily offerings on the altar for the whole family.

The Burmese family is a loosely defined unit, its membership varying with the circumstances. Sons and daughters and sisters, aunts and uncles acquired by marriage, may or may not be incorporated; there is no rule. But most Burmese have a warmhearted desire for as many relatives as possible, including cousins and in-laws. Our word for "relative" has the same root as the one for "friend," and for the ten beings who merit our greatest love. This list begins with the Buddha and the *arahats* — those who have reached the state of Nirvana — and includes, with the parents, benefactors outside the family who can give one either material gifts or counsel and example in moral living.

Daw Mi Mi Khaing, *a Mon, is the author of* Burmese Family *and of an as yet unpublished account of the postwar transition period in the Shan State, where her husband Sao Saimong is now Principal Education Officer. She too is an educator in her own right, with a degree from the University of London, and serves as Principal of Kambawsa College, a boarding school for boys in Taunggyi.*

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BURMESE NAMES

by DAW MI MI KHAING

BURMESE names are often very confusing to foreign visitors because we do not necessarily hand down family surnames from generation to generation and Burmese wives seldom use the names of their husbands. Thus U Sein Tun's son might be Maung Saw Tin, and his wife might be called Daw Mya Aye.

The titles prefixed to a name are also a bit difficult at first. A boy will be called "Maung" ("young brother") till he is about twenty, and a girl "Ma." But Maung and Ma are also common personal names, as with the well-known writers Dr. Maung Maung and Ma Ma Lay. An older man will address a much younger one as "Maung," while a landowner or a businessman would address a tenant farmer or laborer as "Maung." A little further up the age and status scale comes "Ko" ("elder brother"), and, finally, "U," the form for a man who has made his mark in life. Yet, no matter how successful, he would always be too modest to sign himself as "U," and if his personal name is a single word he will prefix it with "Maung." For a married or an older woman the title is "Daw," but in conversation this is often dropped and affection or respect is indicated by doubling one of the syllables of her name. Then there is "Bo" for an army officer or someone who distinguished himself in our struggle for independence.

One or more of a Burmese child's names is almost certain to show the day on which he was born — a survival from our belief that human destiny is linked with the stars. Certain letters of the alphabet are ascribed to each day, so that a "Thursday's child" would have one name beginning with our P, B, or M.

Burmese is a monosyllabic language, and each part of our names is an actual word that means something, or even several things, depending on how it is pronounced. Thus I am "Little Mother" (Mi Mi) "Branch of the Tree" (Khaing) (though "khaing" can also mean "firm"), and our Prime Minister, U Nu, is "Mr. Tender." Naturally enough, parents try to select for their children names denoting desirable qualities, beautiful things in nature or some form of worldly success. A merchant I know was aptly named "Surmounting a Hundred Thousand," while the Rector of Rangoon University, Dr. Htin Aung, is "Distinguished and Successful."

Being so handsomely named is not embarrassing, however, because we become so used to our names, and those of our friends, that we only think of the person and remember their names by their sound. And then too, a great many people have exactly the same names — as with U Mya Sein, the writer-diplomat, and Daw Mya Sein, the historian. And a few Burmese who were educated in British-type schools also have an English name which they still sometimes use among close friends.

"What's in a name?" the saying goes, and perhaps Burmese feel this more than other peoples, for, if one of us is dogged by bad luck or ill health he won't hesitate to choose a new one, simply putting an announcement in the paper that he has done so.

Such a concept extends the family in the most natural way to friends and so to neighbors — in the country to the whole village, and in the city to the *yatkwet*, or neighborhood. The respected elders of the community share with the heads of the family the privileges of giving counsel and being kept informed, as well as the duty of lending a sympathetic ear on all occasions. There is hardly any activity, apart from the daily routine of work, in which all of the neighbors do not participate. And Burmese life is rich in opportunities for communal experience. First one might enumerate some of the occasions when a family interrupts the normal day-to-day pattern to mark an event of special significance.

There will always be a gathering for the naming ceremony of a month-old child, when the baby's hair is cut and washed for the first time. Water scented with acacia seeds and *thayaw* bark is prepared in a silver bowl into which the arriving neighbors drop silver coins. Then sprays of eugenia are dipped in the water, and the little head is sprinkled while blessings are invoked.

Far more elaborate preparations will be made for the ceremonies which mark the passing from childhood into adolescence. For a boy, this is one of the most important events in his life, because, even though he does not plan to be a monk, he will be taken into one of our Buddhist monasteries for a week's novitiate. In this *shinpyu* ritual, the boy's head is shaved to symbolize his renunciation of the world as he temporarily enters the Sangha, the Holy Order of those who consecrate their lives to the teaching of the Buddha. For a week, or longer if he wishes, the lad will wear the orange robe of the monks, go out each morning with a bowl to beg his food, and practice the austerities of the monastic life. But first, at the *shinpyu*, he will be dressed in his finest clothes to receive gifts from the guests at a feast that will be as lavish as possible, with music or better still a troupe of entertainers. And if his parents are poor, the chances are that a relative, or even someone outside the family, will finance the occasion, since merit accrues to the sponsor who helps a boy to begin his spiritual development.

While we do have religious orders for women, they attract far fewer followers than do the monasteries, and our girls do not undergo any religious initiation. For them, the *nahtwin*, the ceremony which takes place at the same time as their brother's *shinpyu*, and is often celebrated with it, is entirely secular and social in character. It is the boring of the ears for the first pair of gold earrings, for which the little girl is dressed in a costume and gilded headdress such as were worn by the ladies-in-waiting at the court of our former kings in Mandalay. The piercing is done with a gold needle by the most esteemed friend or relative of the family. In all the excitement, the child hardly feels any pain.

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There are many other occasions which a Burmese may observe with a celebration: a housewarming; a birthday when he feels that he has reached a blessed plenitude; a sudden remembrance of the gratitude he owes his dead mother; or any other time that he feels good and happy, or, alternatively, low in spirits and needing the blessings of a good deed done. Then the neighbors must flock to his house and there will be evident in the proceedings an intimate and complementary relationship between the religious and the social offices.

One notable exception to this blending of elements is our Burmese marriage ceremony. Here no member of the Buddhist clergy officiates because the love is of a profane nature and the contract purely a social one. But there are the go-between friends and relatives busy making sure that both sides know what they are taking on, consulting with the local sages to see whether the horoscopes of bride and groom are well matched, choosing the most auspicious day and hour for the union, and selecting the most happily married couple of the family's acquaintance to lead the ceremony so that one successful marriage will bless another. The ceremony itself is a beautiful one, full of a simple but moving symbolism. The hands of bride and groom are joined and bound together with a silk scarf. They partake of food from the same bowls and make obeisance together. The guests bring gifts of money to help in setting up the new household. And finally there may be a playful pantomime in which the groom's friends must bargain with the bride's friends to allow him to enter her room.

As with happy times, so too when death occurs both relatives and neighbors rally round to assist the bereaved. Some will conduct the wake for two nights, when a certain amount of card playing is not considered inappropriate, and others will take charge of ordering the coffin and bathing and dressing the corpse, then joining in the march to the graveyard. And it is a deed of merit to sleep in the house of the deceased in the week after his death.

2

One of our most common, and popular, forms of social gathering is the ceremonial offering of a meal to a group of phongyis, usually monks from the neighborhood monastery. Any number may be invited, depending on the resources of the host, and it is the duty of the monks to accept whenever they are asked. Because it is one of the rules of the order that a phongyi will eat nothing after noon, they are invited for breakfast, which means that the women of the house must be up long before dawn to make the necessary and very elaborate preparations.

By seven o'clock the guests will be on hand to greet the monks as they seat themselves around a carpet on which gifts such as provisions, candles, matches, or towels have been spread. The company becomes silent and, in turn, make their respectful *shikos* to the orange-robed guests of honor, kneeling and touching the forehead to the floor. Then, while the host answers friendly inquiries put by the senior phongyi, low, round tables are placed and a hearty meal is laid. There will be a soup and great mounds of rice, a choice of meats, curried or sautéd, cooked vegetables, salad and relish, and fried crackers. The company will not eat until the monks have finished, and they are served with ceremony. After the main courses, new tables are offered, with sweet cakes, coffee, and fruit. Then dishes of pickled ginger and tea leaf with sesamum and half a dozen other ingredients, followed by cups of green tea and, finally, wads of betel for the monks to chew.

This is a full, unstinted menu, and having done it justice the monks cleanse their mouths into spittoons, give a few coughs, and then take their places in a line, seated in the Buddha's lotus pose with the spine perfectly erect and eyes downcast. This is the signal for a great bustle — calling all cooks, servers, romping children, and giggling girls to take their places on the mats for prayers. One of the laymen leads, and — each one reciting his or her own preamble in a low tone — the prayers begin. There is the chant in unison of reverence to the Buddha, his doctrine (the Dhamma, the "way"), and his order (the Sangha, to which the monks belong).

> "I take refuge in the Buddha.
> I take refuge in the Dhamma.
> I take refuge in the Sangha."

Each phrase is repeated three times. Then the recital of the five precepts of right living:

> "I shall abstain from the taking of life.
> I shall abstain from the taking of what is not given.
> I shall abstain from unchastity.
> I shall abstain from speaking falsehood.
> I shall abstain from intoxicants which cloud my reason."

Following this there will be a short sermon by one of the monks, or special *ghatas*, requested by the host as blessing for the home or the occasion, are recited in beautiful melody and entire concentration by the monks. Then the gifts are presented and acknowledged with a touch of the hand, no more. (For a Burmese, gratitude lies first with the giver, who has been allowed to acquire merit through the acceptance of his gift.) The donor takes up a glass jar holding water and pours it drop by drop into a silver bowl while the phongyi intones that this is the water of the continuance of merit from existence to existence, that the good deeds we do in this life will help us in our next incarnation. Then the donor declares his desire to share the merit with all present, and is acclaimed with a "*Thadu*" ("Well done!") repeated three times. The monks rise and file out, followed by young men carrying their gifts. Then more food is brought and the guests set to with a will.

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THE PEOPLES OF BURMA

Our country takes its name from that of the largest ethnic group in our Union — the Burmans — but to understand Burmese society today it is important to bear in mind that our State is a federal union of many different peoples, most of them with their own languages and distinct, if sometimes related, cultures.

About three-fourths of the Union's total population of roughly eighteen millions are Burmans. Burmese is their home language, they are almost all Buddhists, they wear Burmese dress, and inhabit the central part of the country (see map on last page).

Except for slightly over a million Chinese, Indians, and Pakistanis, the rest of our population are minorities, long indigenous to Burma, who inhabit an elongated horseshoe of hill country encircling the Irrawaddy and Sittang river valleys. Our constitution has provided semiautonomous states for the Shans, Kachins, Karens, and Kayahs, and a Chin Hills Special Division, while these and many other of the fifty-odd tribes and subgroups are proportionally represented in the House of Nationalities, the upper house of our parliament.

The Shans, who number about a million and a half, have dominated the high plateaux of east Burma since the thirteenth century, but they and their kinsmen, such as the Thais, are found in great numbers all over Southeast Asia. Buddhists in religion and practicing wet rice cultivation, the Shans early developed a strong social system, based on small feudal principalities ruled by hereditary sawbwas, who are only now gradually surrendering their powers of local government. Most of the Shans are farmers who work the small valleys, with colorful and far less advanced peoples such as the Pa-os and Palaungs living on the hills.

The Karens, over a million strong, are scattered all over southern Burma, and only about a third of them live in the Karen State which they fought to obtain in 1954. Many of the Karens were converted by Christian missionaries and won distinction as soldiers. They are mainly agriculturalists, although a number have moved to the cities.

Some 300,000 Kachins have lived in northern Burma since the fifteenth century. The Kachins are animists, with a complex social structure based on clans, chieftainships, and small villages. They usually farm small hilly tracts cut from the forest. The Chins, of whom there are some 200,000 living in the hills on the western side of Burma, have a simple existence at about the same cultural level.

Neither the Mons in the south nor the Arakanese on the western coastal strip have a state of their own, but both groups have developed high cultures in the past, supplied many leaders to the Civil Services, and are proud of their identities.

To blend so many heterogeneous traditions into a single nation is no easy task, either socially or politically, but all of us are keenly aware of the need for protecting minority interests and correcting economic and educational inequalities. In this spirit of tolerance and mutual assistance we are creating a happy and cohesive Union of Burma.

Everyone loves these parties for our monks: the children who revel in the excitement and special food; the young men and women who want to dress up in their finest silk clothes and jewels; the old men and women who are thinking most about their lives to come; the middle-aged who like to meet and gossip in a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere which is at the same time hallowed by religion; the shyest and homeliest whose special talent may be the preparation and serving of the food. Moreover, feeding the monks gives full scope for the great love all we Burmese have for giving away or spending our resources — we are not a people who save or hoard — the importance that we attach to good eating, and our preference for the maximum informality and liveliness.

In our warm climate we like, except in the monsoon months, to be outdoors, and our traditions give us many opportunities to join festival processions to the monastery or the pagoda, each dressed in his best and bearing gifts or offerings. The calendar, which in Burma is a lunar one, counted by the days of the moon's waxing and waning, is liberally sprinkled with holidays.

Around the New Year, which for us usually falls on the 13th of April, we have our tumultuous *Thingyan*, the water festival, comparable to the Indian *Holi*. In times gone by this was more quiet, with the young gently sprinkling scented water on the old in token of their deference. Today it has become a wild outburst of mass dousing and soaking, a chance to release pent-up energy at the time of our hottest weather. In the cities all business stops for three days and everyone takes to the streets to get wet as much and as often as possible. Little boys have squirt-guns and the girls toss water with pans and buckets. Older youths go out in jeeps and even grown men rent trucks to cruise the streets, hurling water from barrels in the car. Fire hoses are commandeered, and woe betide the motorist who tries to keep his windows closed and not join in the sport.

Thingyan is also the time for making fun of our betters, and particularly the politicians. In Rangoon elaborate floats are prepared on which young people in regalia perform song and dance shows, lampooning officialdom in salty and satiric verses composed for the occasion. Roadside pavilions are erected in each quarter, where the floats will pause in their parade of the city and each group put on its show for the judges in competition for prizes. *Thingyan* is a time for dancing, too, though, actually, dancing comes so naturally to the Burmese that, in one form or another, it is part of almost all our festivals.

At the full moon of Kason (in early May) we remember the enlightenment of the Buddha beneath a bo tree in the Ganges plain by going to pour water on our own bos, some of which are seedlings brought by Prime Minister U Nu from Gaya itself. In

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the afternoon of this day, in my own town of Taunggyi, offerings of uncooked rice, firewood, oil, and fruits are carried in procession to the monasteries, with a great flourish of gongs and cymbals.

Soon after Kason the monsoon breaks and the rains come. The hard-baked earth is stirred; jasmines and gardenias, *thanakha*, *swedaw* and other shrubs are in flower. All during Wa, the Buddhist Lent, for three months, it rains. The heavy, steady downpour never seems to stop, but the people take heart in it; "The rain is good," they say, as they think of the rice paddy over millions of acres growing green and tall. Even in the wet weather there will be gift-bearing throngs on the roads to the monasteries on full-moon days, new-moon eves and the quarter days.

In October the rains peter out. Comes the full moon of Thadingyut and another festival, with lighting of houses this time, pandals for feasting and dancing, and *pwè* troupes putting on shows for the crowd at central points in the town. This is our springtime. There is a rush of weddings, which were banned during Lent; and a greater rush to make gifts to the monks, for this is the one month when their saffron robes may be presented. The rich hold their own robe-giving ceremonies, the poor subscribe to a neighborhood pool, but anyone may attend and enjoy all of them

Our next full moon, Tazaungmon (in November), is perhaps the finest of the year; cool air, clear skies, the moon shining bright and big. Then smoke balloons in the shape of huge animals are sent aloft, and the neighborhood processions vie with each other in having the most beautiful *padaythabin*, a fabulous, mythical tree hung with gifts of all kinds for the monasteries.

And so through the Christian Nativity which passes unrecognized for itself but now takes color from our new Independence celebrations on January 4. Then in March it is Tabaung, and the mad winds are scattering the roads with flaming butea blossoms, scarlet cotton-tree flowers, the fragrant *ingyin* and the white bauhinia. This is our harvest season, when for long ages our most renowned pagodas have held their annual fairs to which the country people flock, on foot or by oxcart, from miles around. After this, while the frangipani and the oleanders flower, the heat rises again and people sweat and grumble for another month till the miraculous "mango showers" of mid-April announce another New Year.

Have I made Burmese life sound like one grand joyous song? Let me assure you that I have not really exaggerated its good will and fraternity, its spirit of helpfulness, its generosity, warmth, and contentment. Fortunately - or unfortunately — it is all too true.

Burmese society is happy, I think, partly because its different elements are so well adjusted to each other. There is room in it for all ages. The old feel neither unwanted nor an urge to behave like the young when there is a definite function for them in every festivity and a role in the home routine which the younger members are only too glad to have discharged. So it is with other associations: for example, the relationship between men and women.

There is no "battle of the sexes" in Burma. Burmese women feel the spiritual superiority in a man. How deny this natural instinct that we have, this fact which seems to us all too apparent? It is simply a part of good manners, of what is pleasurable and seemly, to respect the person of a male, to give precedence to his manhood on all social occasions, and to attend to his wants. But in the all-important matters of money, of divorce, of inheritance, of freedom of movement, the right of giving advice, of transacting business or of putting one's own name alongside a husband's on the shop front, women admit no inferiority. Thus they serve without shackles, and are equal without impairing the pride of masculinity.

Or consider the relation of children to grown-ups. Though children are indulged to an extreme degree in some things, the basis of the love they are shown is their completely subordinate status to adults. No stormy period of adolescent rebelliousness against elders is anticipated (except, perhaps, when a boy is first stirred toward sex). The doctrine of respect is something the growing child repeats incessantly: to the Buddha, his doctrine, his order, to parents and to teachers respect is due — a respect described as compounded of fear and love. The term "teacher" is not confined to the schoolroom. In the broad sense of "guide and friend," it is extended to any loved benefactor, no matter what his walk in life.

3

In Burma you will find a minimum of friction between the rich and the poor. Where little importance is attached to the amassing of material possessions there is little difference in the clothing, food, or housing of a man and his poorer or richer neighbor. Class distinctions hardly operate. The true mark of a refined man being his correct bearing toward all ages, his mastery of religious teachings and sacred literature, and his observance of the precepts of normal living, a poor man could win a lottery and move with ease among the wealthiest.

Rarely does a Burmese feel frustrated. No impetus of high ambition drives him to work hard or leaves him disappointed when he fails. Few things cut deep. The less pleasant aspects of British colonialism, for example, left scars only on those who actually came to grips with it in political struggle, the majority having forgotten their rancor if they ever harbored any. Because we take things so lightly, faults are easily condoned. If a man falls below the standards set by society, his shortcomings

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will be debated and decried, but if he has not been guilty of inhumanity or sacrilege, he is accepted quite soon again. The same holds for a woman: there is no long slur; with us nothing is irreparable.

There is little feeling of insecurity among us; the "age of anxiety" has not yet reached Burma. A man may lose his livelihood, but his wants are few: some articles of light clothing, a mat and pillow in part of a room, a share in the rice pot for himself and his family without great damage to his prestige in the house of one relative or another. And there are few lonely spinsters and hardly any bachelors. Neighbors and friends, adept at matchmaking, will quickly put an end to such unnatural states.

Friends from abroad often say to me: "It's wonderful how happy you Burmese all seem to be, but is your social system, fine as it is for the individual, really good for the country?" Alas! I must confess that in terms of orderly urban communities, of unremitting hard work and nation-building, of developing our resources to give an increasing population more elaborate modern living standards our qualities, our very contentment, betray us.

The great gregariousness and love of festivity leave little time for sustained application to a career. The happy social system that guarantees freedom from want and loneliness for the great majority spares little of a man's income for other uses. When he contributes toward every funeral, wedding, or religious celebration in his community, he is naturally content to own few household goods, but he has little left, either, to subscribe to public charities — the care of the blind, the leprous, the crippled, the uneducated. Our philanthropy is personal and religious, rather than broadly social. The ease of dependence on an elder, or a patron, also saps initiative. It is a compliment often paid the fortunate to say that a person "shelters in their strength." And then there is the tenderness of this Burmese "strength." It is apt to be hurt if embarrassment or constraint of any sort is caused to another by it. This fear of abusing our strength also prevents us, in professional life, from pointing out mistakes or shortcomings for fear of humiliating, or assuming uncourteous authority over others. It is no wonder that efficiency in business or civil administration still eludes us. And our easygoing readiness to condone, to forgive, does not create the kind of public opinion needed to mold reliable workers dedicated to their professions, or even to keep our settlements trim and sanitary.

Add to this our proud history. The spirit of our ancestors who marched victorious on bare feet from Assam in the west to Cambodia in the east is still with us. The pride in an isolated inland culture that saw no real superiority in anything from the outside world for many centuries is hard to eradicate. Inherited by a people who are naturally clever and animated, who are endowed with artistic talents and with physical beauty, who live in a social system that allows a sense of both spiritual and worldly fulfillment by its own standards, it has produced an irrepressible élan and a charming insouciance, but also a slapdash confidence about things in general, a fatal lack of humility in approaching any task, and, since we have a sense of humor, sufficient amusement at our own national shortcomings to take the edge off our present hardships — without, however, any conviction of inferiority to any other race of people.

THE BEDA FLOWER

by U Thein Han

Close friends of the water,
The beda hyacinths are floating on the stream.
There is no wind today, but they drift with the current
In a movement that is endless and timeless.

On the bank sits a boy with a reed pipe who mimics the coucal bird;
The coucal leads, and then the piper follows:
"O Beda, who come with the flow-tide and go with the ebb,
How I shall miss you when you have gone.

"Upstream and downstream you float;
From where did you come, and where are you going?
And when the sun sets and the current slackens,
By what bank will you come to rest?"

(Freely adapted from the Burmese original)

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THE 13-CARAT DIAMOND

A Story

by DAW KHIN MYO CHIT

1

It was during the dark days of the Japanese occupation in Burma. We had been married only two years and we were beginning to settle down. Ko Latt had a nice job, but our dreams of a bright and happy future were shattered by the war. We found ourselves without a home, without jobs, in fact without anything except a mischievous toddler who was always hungry. We were lost in the great maze of wartime life.

At that time many people who had never been in business before turned petty traders and seemed to do well. Some kind friends tried to help us by giving us goods to be sold on a commission basis. Easy money, no doubt. It seemed like child's play. But look what happened. A customer would come to our roadside stall and go over our wares with critical eye as if she would not take them even if we gave them away for nothing. With a look of contempt she would ask, "How much are you asking for this laundry soap?"

"Five cakes for one *kyat*."

"What a price! Let's see, how about giving me six for one *kyat*, ten *pyas*?"

It made my head swim. I pressed the mental accelerator but it refused to budge. I blushed and stammered, "Yes." If I sold at a loss, I couldn't help it. Even then my troubles were not over. The customer went on bargaining.

"What about five for eighty *pyas*?"

"Yes, yes, take them, take as many as you like!" and I added a few strong words under my breath.

Our business career seemed to be made up entirely of similar scenes. Let me not go into humiliating details. Suffice it to say that we got into all sorts of scrapes. Our wares were pinched. The day's figures would not add up right. Only our son enjoyed the fun. He took the rags used for packing, wrapped himself up in them and ran along the pavement dancing with glee. We had to laugh at the little rascal in spite of ourselves.

It is easy enough for people who are well off to sing of poverty, love in a hut, and so on. We who have gone through it have no sentimental illusions. "The worm in the ground knows every tooth of the harrow. The butterfly above preaches patience." Poverty, to say the least, is very uncomfortable.

After a while we managed to get employment in one of the government offices. By that time Allied air raids had begun and we had to shift from one place to another, losing some of our few belongings with every move. At last we settled down in a ramshackle shed in the suburbs. It was close to our office building so I could work and still keep tabs on our son at home. When the air-raid sirens sounded, I would rush home and take him to a safe shelter.

In spite of the raids, we were happier because we were no longer unemployed. We had the dignity of being government servants although our joint salaries barely paid for the daily necessities. It was difficult to believe that we had to live on the edge of starvation. Could such things really happen in Burma, a land flowing with milk and honey?

We had rice, but cooking oil, a product of Upper Burma, could not be secured. It became so scarce that we had to be content with animal fat. How I hated that abominable grease floating on my curries! After passing through stages of impotent fury, rebellion, and frustration, I resigned myself

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and invented various ways of cooking eatable dishes with leaves of sweet potato and roselle. Ko Latt was wonderful. He took things like a philosopher. When we sat down to meals, he would look at the steaming dishes and say, "Yum yum, it smells delicious." He always had something nice to say about my cooking. This braced me up and I went on creating masterpieces.

As for clothes — bed sheets, tablecloths, and even curtains had to be made into something to wear. Our son had his shirts made from old napkins.

The war raged on and things went from bad to worse. Japanese paper money flew like dead leaves — only it did not fly our way. Yet petty traders, merchants, commission agents were flourishing. I saw them with stacks of money, spending like mad.

One day I ran into a woman who had once been my servant sitting at a little stall. She looked prosperous, much fatter and darker than when I had known her before. She did not see me at first as she was busy with her customers. When she recognized me, she could hardly hide her surprise at my shabby appearance. I writhed under her stare and mumbled something about dried fish which I had no intention of buying. Too late I realized I could not afford it and I blushed as I fumbled with my purse. The woman composed herself quickly and asked me where we had been all the time, and how was our little son. Before I knew what was happening she had made me a present of a package of dried fish. I was too embarrassed to say anything. I just handed the bundle back to her, but she laughingly pushed it into my basket. On the way home, I shed tears — enough for those dried fish to swim in.

That night it rained heavily but we were glad that we did not have to worry about air raids. Our roof leaked but we managed to find a dry corner for the child. He slept soundly, surrounded by tin cans into which the rain leaked in musical drops. I lighted our ancient kerosene lamp and Ko Latt lit up a cheroot. After taking a few luxurious puffs he opened an old book of humorous stories and began to read aloud. But I hardly heard; I was brooding over the morning's incident and a wave of self-pity came over me.

Ko Latt read on, but he must have sensed what was going on in my mind, because I listened silently without comment, without chuckling. As he shut the book, I broke out, "Why don't they ever come our way? I mean the Jap banknotes. This morning I saw our old servant woman. She's making lots of money. She's now fat and covered with jewels. You would hardly know her — you'd take her for a maharaja's elephant."

Ko Latt laughed. "Well, thanks for warning me. I might have tried to ride on her back."

But his joke fell flat. I was too depressed. Ko Latt peered at me through his horn-rimmed spectacles, with one lens cracked. "I know how you feel, dear, but remember this can't go on forever. We have to do without many things but we still have each other and we have that little rascal," he said, pointing at our sleeping son.

I felt ashamed. "I'm sorry I can't take things as bravely as you do. It just seems heartbreaking to live like this when other people are rolling in money. Look at those brokers and agents. Most of them can't even write their own names. They don't have any capital either. A broker just goes around asking people if they want anything and if he, the broker that is, gets it, whatever it is, for them, that is the ones who want something, then he, that is the broker, gets a commission."

Ko Latt laughed. "You're talking like a character in that book."

"Can't help it. I'm such a goof about business. What I mean is some people make piles of money that way. And the ones who get it know that the Jap notes are mere scraps of paper, so they are buying gold and diamonds at any price."

He looked puzzled. "What has that got to do with us? We have no diamonds or gold to sell."

Sometimes Ko Latt is a bigger goof than I. I explained to him patiently, "If we can find someone who wants to sell gold or diamonds and someone, I mean another person, who wants to buy, we might get a commission that would be five or six times our joint salaries. We could get a good tin of sesamum oil with the money."

My good man smacked his lips. "Oh, for a taste of real sesamum oil! I'm so sick of the smell of lard. But where can we find someone who wants to buy diamonds and another who wants to sell?"

I was glad I had driven home my point. I just smiled, and said: "Leave that to me."

I shall always remember the look in his eyes as he said, "I know I can always rely on you."

2

So it began. I discussed the matter with my office mates, who were as hard up as we were. Ko Ba Than, who worked at the next desk, encouraged me. "Don't lose heart. You have only one child and I have three. My family couldn't possibly live on my pay. It's my wife who does it. You know her. She hasn't had a college education like you — she just writes enough to sign her name — but she's amazing. The other day that neighbor of ours, the fishwoman, wanted to buy a pair of diamond bracelets. She told my wife she would give up to one *lakh* for them. My wife found someone who wanted to sell jewelry and made a bargain for ninety thousand. She took the bracelets to the fishwoman who gave her the whole *lakh*."

"So your wife made ten thousand out of it!" I cried. Ko Ba Than smiled. "More than that! She also got a 25 per cent commission from the seller. Just a day's work. Child's play." I'm no good at

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figures. 10,000 + 25/100 × 100,000. . . . I struggled and gave it up. If I was to do this kind of business, I must have pencil and paper.

Ko Ba Than continued, "You can do this sort of thing, too. If my wife can do it, why can't you? You are much cleverer. With an intellect like yours . . . there is nothing you cannot do."

I was flattered. Ko Ba Than was a wise man, a good judge of Homo sapiens. Next day I called on his wife. She was a simple, unassuming little woman, whom I liked very much, partly because she gave me a feeling of superiority. She seemed to be very glad that I, who belonged to a higher intellectual level, had condescended to take an interest in such mundane matters. She gave me all the information. "It is very easy. Ma Ma, not so difficult as working in an office. Many people have asked me to get things for them. One wants a 13-carat diamond. He will give one *lakh* per carat with 25 per cent commission. If you can strike a bargain with the seller for less, you can keep the difference." I reeled. Even without the extra money the commission would come to 25/100 × 100,000 × 13!!!

Ba Than's wife was as cool as a cucumber. She was used to this kind of thing. "Just try to get a 13-carat diamond, Ma Ma. If you get it, please contact Mr. Ebrahim."

That night I discussed the matter with Ko Latt and we were full of hope. We planned the campaign. First we would go to Thingangyun to see a lady who dealt in jewelry. There was no bus service and Thingangyun was five or six miles away. This did not matter, for we owned a two-wheeled mechanism — a bicycle by courtesy. Its forebears were distinguished. We could trace their genealogy as far as an auspicious alliance between a kingly Raleigh frame and aristocratic Humber wheels . . . but decadence had set in with intermarriage with mongrel spokes.

The tires had been worn through so we had had to put pieces of raw rubber round the rims. These were called "solid tires," good in their own way — no need to pump them up, no punctures, and they last a long time. They also got stretched now and then so that we had to cut them shorter and fasten the ends with a piece of wire. This was easy for a handyman like Ko Latt. He can fix anything with a pair of pliers, a hammer, and an interesting oration in strong language. I play an insignificant role in such great undertakings, standing by with absorbent cotton and iodine, at the same time improving my vocabulary.

On Sunday morning we got up at dawn and began our journey. I sat on the rusty rear-fender rack with my son on my lap. Ko Latt pedaled along on the bumpy road with a song on his lips. I hummed the tune and the child was agog with excitement. "The lark's on the wing; the snail's on the thorn; God's in His Heaven — all's right with the world!" It was a nice ride.

Fortunately, the lady — let's call her "Auntie" — was at home. We explained our quest, promising her a share of the commission if she could find us the jewel. Auntie seemed to be interested at once. She could certainly get it, she said, and told us to come again the next Sunday. She gave us a disquisition which might easily have been entitled, "How to get rich quick." She emphasized her points by waving her big hands and shaking her head a great deal. Her bracelets jingled and her diamond earrings sparkled. I watched her fascinated, although the child was bored to tears. Ko Latt had to take him outside and try to interest him in the marching Japanese soldiers. At last neither father nor son could stand the boredom any longer; they came in and cut short the juiciest pep talk I had ever heard.

Business being over, we hurried home; because it was an unusually fine day, an ideal day — for bombers. We were only a few blocks from home when the air-raid siren wailed. Ko Latt pulled the brakes suddenly and the three of us rolled into the roadside ditch. Luckily, we were not seriously hurt. My son, used to this kind of thing, did not even cry. As it happened to be only a reconnoitering plane, we had time to get into the shelter before a big formation of bombers followed.

3

The week wore on with the usual air raids and meatless meals. I went about in an arithmetical haze, working out sums. Even when I shut my eyes, multiplication signs flew to and fro.

We sallied forth again the following Sunday. Auntie was smiling happily. She had found it. She knew a person who had a 13-carat diamond to sell. She told us to bring Mr. Ebrahim the Sunday after that. This was all we wanted that day, but I would have liked to listen to Auntie's how-to-get-rich-quick talk. Ko Latt gave me his you-do-no-such-nonsense look and led me firmly away.

We came home full of high spirits. How nice it was to have such a lucrative job to do on Sundays. Each week end brought us nearer to fabulous wealth. If everything went well, we could even resign from our jobs and devote all our time to big business. We were rudely shaken from these rosy dreams by a distress signal from the bike. The next moment, we found to our dismay that the bare rim of the wheel had parted company with the solid tire. Ko Latt got off the bike, and I ran and picked up the poor tire, scorned and despised, yet so useful! I held it in my hands like a snake and cried, "Look, it has stretched! What are we going to do?" Ko Latt examined it, and like an expert pronounced the verdict. It was a hopeless case, since we had no tools, not even a knife to shorten it. We did not want to risk our teeth for they must be preserved for the plentiful days to come. There was no time to waste since bombers might come any minute.

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We put the child on the bike and pushed along the road. He at least enjoyed the ride, playing snake charmer with the tire.

This incident had a bad effect on Ko Latt's morale. His temper did not improve even when we got home. He was fed up with the whole thing. I tried to brace him up as best I could.

"Next Sunday will be the last day of our quest. We shall do business with Mr. Ebrahim and come home with bags full of money. Of course, Ba Than's wife must get a share. She is the informant, a sleeping partner. Oh, everyone will be on velvet. I know we shall succeed. . . ." I would have gone on with my talk, shaking my head, waving my hands like Auntie, if Ko Latt had not curtly told me to get the tools so he could repair the tire. Since no bracelets jingled and no diamond earrings sparkled, my words did not carry much weight. Once the bicycle was repaired Ko Latt was his amiable self again. We sent word to Mr. Ebrahim to come to us the next Sunday.

Somewhat to our surprise, Mr. Ebrahim arrived at the duly appointed time, also on a bike. Ko Latt happily told him how we had managed to locate the diamond and Mr. Ebrahim looked impressed. He listened silently, stroking a beard so luxuriant that no one would have suspected the presence of a mouth had not a cigar stuck out of the foliage.

So the two bikes rolled out along the road. When we got to Auntie's place, she had two young men with her. One was her Cousin Sonny, a youth in the early twenties, with a long Valentino crop of hair. His face was conspicuously powdered and he wore a pink shirt with gold studs and an imitation silk *longyi* — a gaudy affair, also pink. He sat smoking a cheap Japanese cigarette, talking only a little, as if we were all not worth the bother. So much for Exhibit A. The other was a Sino-Burman with a pale, dissipated appearance. His name was Ko Set Khwan. He wore a Hawaiian shirt and long pants. On his nose was a pair of rimless spectacles. He looked prosperous with his diamond studs, rings, and a heavy gold watch chain. He was standing beside his bicycle which was properly fitted with real tires. He must be the owner of the diamond.

After the introduction, Mr. Ebrahim asked Ko Set Khwan to exhibit the diamond. But Ko Set Khwan asked him explicitly if he were the buyer. I cannot remember the details of Ebrahim's answer, which was of a lengthy nature. I was filled with admiration as I listened to him and wondered why he was not a leading diplomat. But Ko Set Khwan was not at all impressed; he just kept demanding if Mr. Ebrahim himself were going to buy it. I was awed by the man's strength of character — a strong silent type, this Ko Set Khwan.

Mr. Ebrahim's diplomacy gave way to unconcealed annoyance and he moved his head so vigorously that his beard rose and fell like a cataract on his chest. At last he could not avoid the issue; he had to admit that he was not the buyer. It was a friend who wanted to buy the diamond. Ko Set Khwan firmly asked to be taken to the said friend. Mr. Ebrahim tried to evade this request but at last he had to give in.

Auntie's face was a study. She must know the details of this business. As she could not come along, her Cousin Sonny would accompany them. It became clear to us that we must also go along with them or we would be left out. The four bicycles — Mr. Ebrahim, Sonny, representing Auntie, Ko Set Khwan, and Ko Latt with me and the child on the rack — made a fine procession as we rolled along the road studded with bomb craters.

As we passed a teashop where four or five men were talking rather loudly, we heard one of them say, "Can't you get business done without these damned brokers? To hell with them! One is bad enough and now you have half a dozen of them. . . ." That was it, but I didn't care. I was set on the royal road to Xanadu.

We reached an imposing house and Mr. Ebrahim alighted. We all followed his example. They all went up, but my son and I stayed downstairs to watch over the bicycles.

A few minutes later, they all came down again, muttering in consternation. My eyes eagerly sought Ko Latt's but he looked away. My heart was heavy. I dared not ask, because as in ancient Greek dramas, scenes of tragic intensity should be suggested rather than represented. Our friends were speaking loudly and wildly, each of them talking at the same time, so I could not make out what they said.

As we prepared to get on our bikes, Ko Latt muttered something about the mistress of the house still not being the buyer. She knew someone else who . . . Our eyes met and saw in each other's depths the long trail leading into the bottomless stomach. Then Ko Latt shrugged his shoulders.

We gave up the trail and, somehow, we have lived to tell the story. Still, I feel sorry that I never held in my palm a 13-carat diamond in flesh and blood — or rather, carbon and whatever it is.

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CONTINUITY IN BURMA

The Survival of Historical Forces

by U KYAW THET

1

ABOUT two years ago, Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, hoping to weld the neutralist nations into a dynamic third force in international politics, made state visits to India and Burma. His reception here was enthusiastic, but he found that in spite of coincidental similarities the situation in our country and his was fundamentally quite different. The strongest impression that Marshal Tito is reported to have taken home was of the all-pervading continuity of historical attitudes and behavior in Burma.

As a successful Marxist revolutionary, Tito seems to have been puzzled and not a little disappointed by the Burmese. Our brand of socialism struck him as too gentle and too tame. Socialists such as Tito have rather standardized attitudes about history. They expect us to believe, for example, that the medieval despotism of pre-colonial Asia is as dead as the dodo, having left no trace of itself on the modern world. As for the colonial period which followed, it is anathema, and any vestigial remnant from it is a slur on the efficiency and good name of the modern socialist. The cleaner the slate is wiped of the past the better.

Burma, however, has not behaved according to these rules. In fact, she has been stubbornly independent, following a middle course between the "lines" of both great power blocs, and managing, in the process, fully to satisfy neither. I suspect that what irritated Marshal Tito most in Burma must have been the seeming inefficiency with which a marvelous opportunity for a really drastic and thorough socialist revolution had been let slip. I am sure he felt that our revolutionaries had not gone nearly far enough in cleaning house of the past. He probably did not realize to what extent the freely elected leaders of the new Burma have been conditioned by our history — and that surprise should only have been felt if they had behaved differently than they have done.

A considerable measure of ruthlessness was an essential requisite for a socialist revolution such as the one in Yugoslavia. And in the context of Burmese history a similar ruthlessness might well have been expected in the character of our leaders. Quite to the contrary, their political behavior has been benign. To understand this paradox we must go back for a look at Burmese history.

From the very beginning its trend was toward autocracy. Our earliest forebears were a people who had wandered away from the region now known as Kansu in western China. Probably they started on their long trek in order to escape absorption into the Sinic world. The rigors and dangers of their migration must have created pressures toward the appearance and acceptance of a leadership pattern. Over twelve hundred years ago, when they were on the threshold of what is now Burma, they were caught for a while in the clashing ambitions of Tibet and Tang China. Both sides impressed these early Burmans into service as auxiliaries in their wars.

We do not know what the Tibetans called our ancestors, but the Chinese knew them as "the Meng people." The Chinese often named a people by the title of their ruler, and in the Chinese "*Meng*" some scholars see our Burmese "*Min*," which still denotes the wielder of power. Thus

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"*Ingaleik Min*" was our equivalent for the expression "British Raj" in India. It seems probable, then, if this philological evidence is accepted, that by the beginning of the Burmese historical period authority had become centralized.

After the entry into Burma, the pressures toward centralized authority were maintained, perhaps even increased. The region settled earliest by the Burmese was that around Kyaukse, just south of the present Mandalay. Here a number of perennial streams were developed into an elaborate system of irrigation which has remained important through the centuries. We know from the examples of ancient Egypt, the fertile crescent in Mesopotamia, and ancient China that the construction and maintenance of large irrigation projects have always demanded centralized authority. Society usually responded by giving arbitrary powers to a king. Inevitably, individual kings used these powers to acquire more. Burma followed this normal pattern.

Later, with the spread of the Burman settlements from Kyaukse over the more fertile adjacent regions, where irrigation was not needed, a tendency toward decentralization might have developed and perhaps in time led to the overthrow of the authoritarian principle. But this did not happen; such a development was inhibited by the introduction of a totally new factor: Theravada Buddhism, which was adopted by King Anawrahta of Pagan as the state religion in the eleventh century.

Now essentially, the teachings of the Buddha stress the importance of the individual — his salvation from the sorrows of the mind through dependence on his individual efforts. No external authority can affect the progress of a man's soul toward perfection in the slightest. This recognition in Buddhism of the importance of the individual has affinities with the basic concepts of Western democracy, and the fervor with which the new faith was embraced by the Burmans might logically have resulted in a rapid transformation of their political ideology. That it did not can be explained by reference to certain other cultural elements that came into Burmese life along with Buddhism.

Buddhism was first introduced by the Indian colonists who were sailing all over the seas of Southeast Asia. These Indians brought with them not only their religions — Buddhism and Hinduism — but also the art of writing, mathematics, architectural skills, the science of astrology, international commerce, and the concept of the divine monarch. In Burma it was the king and his family who first took up the new religion. By his patronage and protection of the Buddhist faith, the king became the benefactor of all his people and thereby further strengthened his hold on them. His authority was justified as necessary to defend the purity of the precious faith and insure its survival. Moreover, he had the power and the means to make strikingly manifest the degree of his faith as no other Burman had. The architectural wonders of the city of Pagan bore witness to the king's position as the first lay Buddhist of the land. Indeed, the fact that he could be such a magnificent patron was accepted as proof that he had the most virtuous accumulation of meritorious deeds from previous incarnations to his credit and was therefore deserving of his superior powers. It was this religious sanction for the royal prestige which outweighed the tendencies toward decentralization of power that lay in territorial expansion and the concept of personal freedom inherent in the teaching of the Buddha.

2

THERE was only one other social factor that might perhaps have affected the king's claim to complete supremacy. This was the Sangha, the Order of the Buddhist monks. Monkhood is the ultimate expression of Buddhist self-purification, and the Burmese have always accorded their phongyis an intense veneration. But the true monk, held in reverence by virtue of his very renunciation of the world, could not interest himself in struggles for power. Those who did so fell at once to the level of mere worldly plotters and could be disposed of without public outcry.

The good monks, on the other hand, commanded the king's respect; as a practicing Buddhist, he had to recognize their status and honor it with special privileges. There was, in effect, a balancing of forces. Thus in cases where execution had been ordered, a monk could fling his robe over the condemned and demand his life on condition that he retire to the monastery. Or where the megalomania of local officials became unbearable, the monks were the only ones who, in the name of the individual and humanity, could appeal to higher authority. Personal good faith and humanitarian ideals have functioned in this fashion through the centuries. This tradition — call it, if you will, the guarantee of civil rights by the spirit of religion — is part of Burma's most precious heritage. And it is still very much alive today — a deterrent to totalitarianism or the ruthlessness of some socialist revolutions.

The frequent rebellions of our monarchical period were not aimed at the destruction of the idea of arbitrary rule but at the substitution of one individual, or rival family, for another in the enjoyment of royal power. So complete was the royal domination that neither hereditary courtier-official nor strong middle classes were ever able to arise in Burma. There was the king, and then, as Ignazio Silone said of the bad duke, there was nothing else, and then a long way afterward the peasants. Thus, when the British completed their step-by-step conquest of Burma in 1885 and deposed our last king, Thibaw, there were no vested interests to keep the tradition of monarchy alive. The British exiled Thibaw to a lonely island off the coast of India and

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attempted to substitute the image of the Queen-Empress Victoria. In this they never quite succeeded. Victoria never came out to Burma, and too many of her representatives isolated themselves from native ideas, affairs, language, and aspirations. She had the title "Defender of the Faith" but her faith was not that of the Burmese. The strength of the monarchist idea and its relevance to Burmese life shriveled away amidst alien symbols of power.

As the force of the monarchical idea declined, that of Buddhism gained strength. The psychological outlook of the Burmese at the final triumph of British arms accelerated this trend. Throughout their history, the Burmese had succeeded in maintaining their national identity and had fought off all their neighbors, including the Chinese under the great Chien Lung. Now in their forced integration into a larger and little understood world there were many factors to cause them dismay. As a fighting race they had been humiliated. Their commerce was negligible; their technical abilities were inadequate and obsolete. Painfully aware that their national pride — even their continued existence — was manifestly debatable, the Burmese had to produce something tangible and traditional to justify their future as a separate entity. They found what they needed in Buddhism. The assorted Europeans might be richer, stronger, better trained, but it was comforting to know that all this was as nothing because they did not possess the jewel of the true faith. Buddhism began at this stage to acquire nationalist overtones, and, at the same time, its emphasis on individualism became increasingly significant.

The Burmese were treated as inferiors by the British, but they themselves never felt that they were really inferior and sought in many ways to approach equality with the European. Even under their kings, before the final conquest, they had tried to discover what it was that made the European so formidable. The first impact of British power on Burma had come during the time of the East India Company. So King Mindon, in the 1860's and '70's, set up various trading companies and manufacturing concerns. His chief minister, the Kinwun Mingyi, came back from a tour of Europe convinced that the panacea was constitutional government. It became obvious, however, that he had a personal ax to grind, and constitutionalism did not gather momentum. Various other ideas and theories were taken up, but gradually, as the new generation of Burmans began to study in England, the concept of the democratic system of government became more and more popular. It was in harmony with Buddhism and it could be turned against the British: their own people had self-rule, let them give it to their colonies as well. However, the kind of democracy which would eventually take root in Burma was to be largely determined by the influence of economic factors.

At the time of her integration into the colonial economy of imperial Britain, Burma was a fairly roomy, fertile land, underpopulated by a people conditioned to a slow tempo of life and, by the comparative ease of getting enough to eat, to a dislike of hard routine work. Her communication system was primitive, and, because the kings had never encouraged a merchant middle class, no financial structure had been developed to exploit her considerable agricultural, mineral, and forest resources.

Therefore British and Indian capital was poured into Burma to improve communications and to open up oil fields, the teak forests, and tin, silver and wolfram mines. Hordes of poverty-stricken coolie labor were brought in every year from India to gather the large exportable surplus of rice. South Indian moneylenders — Chettiars — exploited the Burmese farmer's improvidence, taking over his paddy fields by foreclosure. By 1937 the Burmans had lost a good 80 per cent of their arable land. Displaced cultivators became unskilled laborers in the mines and processing plants. Railroads and river steamers, banks and the other adjuncts to the new-style economy, were almost exclusively owned and staffed by British or Indians.

This situation easily convinced the Burman that he was being taken for a ride by foreign capitalism, so that when, from soon after the beginning of this century, our students and intellectuals came in contact with socialist doctrine they readily accepted the validity of Marxist theories. The socialist concept of ownership by and for the people seemed the right and only possible answer to Burma's problems.

3

Enough of the past. But of course the past is very much alive in our present. The serious opinions of a typical educated Burmese today will center on his Buddhist convictions — a faith deeply felt and lived — with his religion's spirit of humanity and individualism extending to belief in a democratic form of government whose economy is state socialism. At a less conscious level, his ancestors' acceptance of monarchy will show itself in a sometimes excessive respect for the authority of elders, teachers, and superiors, and perhaps also in a tendency to give to popular leaders such as the late General Aung San, the "George Washington" of our revolution, the degree of loyalty which one associates with kingship.

Simplifying radically, we might define the Burma of 1958 as a Buddhist Welfare State, with the religion looking after a man's soul and a planned economy his body. Are these two concepts really compatible? Are they self-defeating? Can a convinced Buddhist, who knows that the things of this world are insubstantial and worthless, bring to the hard and tedious task of developing a still backward

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and badly war-ravaged country the energy and perseverance the job will require? The attempt to reconcile these two philosophies is the essential action of our current history. The issue is still in doubt, but, by and large, our elected leaders are clear about their intentions, are extremely determined, and command the trust and respect of the majority of the people.

Their first severe tests came almost together with independence from Britain in 1948. The pathetically late but inevitable bid made by the Karens for a completely separate national existence, the determination of the Communists to seize power, the treachery of ambitious politicians who did not stop short of assassination (General Aung San and almost his whole cabinet were murdered in cold blood) — all these conspired to force the government leadership toward authoritarianism. Both politically and economically, the country was temporarily in ruins. It was tempting to think of dictatorship as a quick and justifiable means toward worth-while ends. But our leaders stood firm; they decided that Burma would in the long run gain more in terms of fundamental rights and happiness if they could muddle through without sacrificing the forms and principles of democratic government.

Our Government-in-power ever since independence has been that of the AFPFL party, the heirs of General Aung San's wartime Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, led since his death by U Nu, U Ba Swe, and U Kyaw Nyein in coalition. In 1946, the AFPFL was still a national popular front including the Communists — who had fought hard to drive out the Japanese and unseat the British — and its Secretary General was Thakin Than Tun, the Communist leader. Than Tun had managed to install many of his followers at the head of the AFPFL provincial organizations. The Communists were in a good position to seize power. However, Than Tun showed his hand a little too soon; he and his party were expelled from the nationalist front. This left the AFPFL's district representatives depleted and weakened.

When in 1948 the Communists opened a full-scale civil war, the Government was pinned down for weeks in a desperate defense of Rangoon and could not muster from its own ranks enough regional leaders to face the mounting Communist attacks. In desperation, the AFPFL had to entrust its authority and resources to men often as ruthless as the Communists. In an alarming number of cases these were the local strongmen, or even bandits — unprincipled opportunists greedy for power and spoils, but ready and able to recruit supporters and fight.

After nearly ten years of sporadic fighting the rebels have still not been totally exterminated, but the Central Government now controls nine-tenths of the country and is intensifying its drive to clean up the rest. In this process of rehabilitation, some of the local strongmen who held the fort have become a very serious problem. Good guerrillas do not necessarily make good administrators with a strong social conscience. Therefore U Nu took an extended leave from the premiership the year before last so that he could devote his whole attention to reforming the AFPFL party structure.

4

As the AFPFL consolidates its position — and there is at the moment no opposition group likely soon to be able to displace it — what will be the distribution of power in Burma? History had decreed that with the disappearance of the Burmese kings and then the *Ingaleik Min*, no one social class would have the tradition of power monopoly. There was no entrenched bourgeoisie, no rural aristocracy. The stage seemed clear for the rapid emergence of a government for, of, and by the people. However, the violence of the war years and the decade of rebellion after them, has raised difficulties that have delayed the realization of true liberal government. The AFPFL leadership is keenly aware of this fundamental problem and has made commendable efforts to meet it. In this it has been aided by one rather unusual circumstance.

That is the position and growing strength of the armed forces. The army has acquitted itself well and contributes significantly to national morale. Its work does not stop with military operations against the insurgents. It is helping to integrate the frontier regions into the Union, and after the rebels are driven out of any given locality, the army sets in to rehabilitate it, organizing schools and building roads, bridges and hospitals. It has become the most disciplined and dedicated arm of the Union Government.

Is there a danger that the army, realizing its strength and prestige, might try to control the Government? Could Burma follow the familiar pattern of other small states where the military, in the name of the people, or efficiency, or national honor, have taken over complete control? I think this is most unlikely. In fact, there have been moments of crisis in the past decade when this could have happened and it has not. Today the armed forces of Burma work in complete harmony and partnership with the civilian leaders. The army chiefs feel themselves part of the team which has worked and fought together for thirty years to secure independence. None of them have displayed the egomania that would drive them to use the army as a tool for personal ambition. They are determined that the new Burmese army should be thoroughly democratic and imbued with the idea of service to the needs of the people.

The present strength of the army, navy, and air force is estimated at sixty thousand. What of that other army, the "army of prayer," as it were, the hundred thousand monks who wear the saffron

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robe of the Buddhist Sangha? Before the colonial period, as we have seen, the phongyis kept aloof from worldly affairs. But under the British, Buddhism became a force in nationalist sentiment. Thus, for example, our Young Men's Buddhist Association (modeled on the YMCA's of the West) grew into a vital center of the independence movement. In the struggle for freedom many monks developed political consciousness.

Today, the phongyis' training is still almost entirely religious, not secular, but there is no question that the Sangha indirectly influences some government decisions. To be sure the Order is not organized on a national basis: there is no primate directing a hierarchy — its structure is decentralized. But undoubtedly there is consultation between officials and the monks at many levels, and it would be a foolhardy politician who took a position or attempted to push through a program that was clearly displeasing to the clergy.

Although the number of government schools is growing from year to year, the number of Burmese children who receive their first education at a monastery school is still in the majority. And it is not only in the rural districts that the humble people of the country go to the monks for counsel about their problems. Nor does there appear to be any decrease in the number of young men who are choosing the monastery as a way of life.

It is clear, then, that the planners who are building a new Burma must reckon with the Sangha in all their thinking. But it is equally plain that the Order is a strong force for stability in the nation, and one which can be counted upon to resist any leftward drift beyond socialism toward totalitarianism or alliance with the world Communist bloc.

SOME BURMESE RIDDLE VERSES

Translated by U Wi

White without being washed —
the fairy shawl.
Full without being filled —
the fairy water pot. [*a*]

All wrapped in spotted gown,
the kettledrummer
grasps with his feet
and eats with his mouth.
Good people all,
please solve it! [*b*]

No foot on earth; but not a swallow.
Nursed in the lap; but not a babe.
Bearded; but not an Indian wallah.
Curly-tailed; but not an ape.
Mellifluous; but no prima donna. [*c*]

The fairy house-post
no insect can bore.
When it is bored at all
there is only one hole. [*d*]

His brain's not acute,
his learning is small;
but when men dispute
he takes seat before all.
If justice is done,
he lets well alone;
but if things go wrong,
he sticks out his tongue. [*e*]

A golden monk,
a one-tusker,
a Shan hat,
a Chinese saddle,
a parakeet,
it is all in one!
What is this? [*f*]

Four oars row hard.
Her ladyship
sits under the canopy. [*g*]

In among the reeds and rushes
a little canoe pushes. [*h*]

The mighty drum will roar;
the dark face pour
its tears; the dead
will live; the hid
will come to light. [*i*]

A cup of cow's milk
floods the whole country. [*j*]

Black-robed and short-naped,
this lonely anchorite
lives in a cell.
He prays all the time
and drinks wine. [*k*]

(*Answers on last page of text*)

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THE WOMEN OF BURMA

A Tradition of Hard Work and Independence

by DAW MYA SEIN

1

TO PEOPLE who come to Burma for the first time there are two things about the status of our women that seem to impress them with particular force. My foreign friends have often told me that they are surprised to see an ordinary Burmese woman sitting at her stall in a bazaar, dressed in the usual *htamein* and jacket, her hair arranged on top of her head in the traditional manner, often smoking a cigar — and handling her trade with all the hard-headed business acumen of a man. Or, in an agricultural family, the wife may be helping with the planting, the reaping, the winnowing. If her husband is a cartman, a Burmese woman may perform her share of the labor. You can see her in business houses, signing contracts and making decisions for the firm, or find her in any of the professions or in parliament. It all seems quite different from the familiar picture of the down-trodden, backward Asian woman.

Yet on a social occasion you will often find that the Burmese women cluster together on one side of the room and leave their men to talk to each other in a group of their own. You will see, at a meal, that the men are served first, that their wives offer them every deference within the home. On a street there is nothing unusual in the sight of a man walking ahead while his wife follows a few paces behind carrying the bundles.

The apparent paradox of these observations is, in fact, quite an accurate indication of the rather special place that Burmese women occupy in our society. For centuries — even before recorded history, from all we can deduce — Burmese women have accepted as their right a high measure of independence. The Buddhist and the Hindu influences that came to our country at a somewhat later date may have modified the social status of women, but we have always retained our legal and economic rights. In my own research work in the village system of Burma I have even found vestiges of a matriarchal system which must have flourished here at one time. The inheritance of certain oil wells, for instance, belonged exclusively to women; in some cases the inheritance to the headmanship of a village was through the female line. To this day we have no family surnames in Burma and a woman keeps her own name after marriage.

Our more recent history has done little to diminish our ancient rights. During the days of the Burmese kings, women were frequently appointed to high office and became leaders of a village, chieftainess, and even ruled as queen. And in a series of Burmese folk tales concerning wise and remarkable decisions in law, which have been collected by Dr. Htin Aung, the judge in each of the stories is a woman called "Princess Learned-in-the-Law." All these fields of administration, government service, law, medicine or business are always open to any Burmese woman who wishes to enter them.

In most of Asia women have had to fight for equality with men primarily on three matters:

DAW MYA SEIN, *born in 1904 in Moulmein, is of Mon and Arakanese stock. Her distinguished career typifies the increasingly active role of women in Burmese public life. Mother of two children, she has still found time to be headmistress of several schools, editor and broadcaster, first woman elected to the Rangoon City Corporation, delegate to the London Round Table Conference of 1931 and the Paris UNESCO Conference of 1946, President of the National Council of Women, and a leader in social work. She is Lecturer in History at Rangoon University and has made two lecture tours in the United States.*

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marriage, divorce, and inheritance. In Burma we have been singularly fortunate in possessing this equality even before we knew it was a problem. The "arranged marriage," customary in so large a part of Asia, is still to be found in some segments of our society, but with this essential distinction: that the parents cannot choose a partner for their daughter without offering her the right of refusal. Most of our young people now marry for love — or at least choose their own partners — and a girl can insist that her parents accept her betrothal to the man she prefers. Even after her marriage a girl can decide, if she wants, to remain in her own family for a while. The marriage itself continues this principle of independence and equality. The wedding is not a religious ceremony but a civil contract — in fact no ceremony is necessary at all; a man and woman can simply make known their decision to "eat and live together."

If, by any chance, either partner of a marriage should wish to terminate their contract in divorce, this, too, is possible and acceptable under Burmese law. If there is mutual consent to the divorce, if the husband and wife both decide — for whatever reason — that they cannot live together, they simply announce the end of the marriage to the headman of the village or to the heads of the two families. But even without this amicable arrangement, a woman can divorce her husband for cruelty, serious misconduct, or desertion, regardless of his consent. If she leaves him for a year and takes no maintenance from him during that time, he can claim a divorce. A man, on the other hand, must leave his wife for three years before she can get an automatic divorce. The reason for this difference of time is, of course, that business or professional duties are more likely to keep a man away from his family for long periods, but Burmese women often joke about how this just shows that a woman can make up her mind two years faster than a man.

2

As in many parts of Asia, polygamy is accepted by Burmese society — but with one important difference. A man cannot marry for a second time without the consent of his first wife, and he must abide by her decision because otherwise she can sue for divorce and a partition of the property. Polygamy is not practiced very much nowadays, especially among educated people, but I remember hearing about the days of my great-grandparents and how government officials who were sent on a tour of duty to the provinces would keep one wife up-country and one in town. Now one seldom hears of such things on that level of society, though the practice still continues in the lower economic groups. My cook's husband, for instance, has three wives, and another of my servants two. Sometimes, in the villages, if a farmer has enough property, he will take more than one wife, but in the towns and among people with a higher standard of education polygamy is increasingly rare.

In Asia a woman's right of inheritance has, perhaps, occasioned more acrimonious argument and fiercer resistance than any other single aspect of women's status. Political rights and franchise have come to Asian women comparatively easily — with less opposition, in fact, than Western women found — but the question of equality in inheritance is still hotly debated in many parts of Asia. Here too, Burmese women find that their traditional law recognizes them equally with men, and all through our history we have had full inheritance rights. These rights are ensured by the rather odd fact that under Burmese Buddhist Law neither a man nor a woman can write a will. All property must be handed on according to the laws of succession. This means that during a marriage a husband and wife are joint owners of all property acquired during their marriage. If the man dies first, the woman automatically inherits — and, besides, she becomes the head of the family with full authority. In the same way, if a woman dies first, the man inherits. If he has more than one wife, there are laws laid down to deal with the complications of inheritance that this situation might raise, laws, that is, which decide which part of the property was accrued before marriage, which part during the marriage, and how it should be divided. Only when both the parents die do the children divide the property among themselves, and then, too, sons and daughters inherit equal shares.

With this background of history and custom in Burma, it is not really surprising that Burmese women have accepted their place in public life as a natural part of their status in society. On landed estates in the past it often happened that a woman, after she had been left a widow, more than doubled or trebled the family property through her own efforts. Before the war, businesses were mostly in the hands of foreigners, but in postwar Burma, as business opportunities arose for Burmese, the women as well as the men took advantage of them. The idea of big businesses, of import-export firms, of offices or shops being run by women (which so surprises the foreigner) seems perfectly ordinary to the Burmese. Equally, women have responded to the educational openings in postwar Burma. For example, at the last university convocation that I attended, about half of the graduating class in the school of medicine were women.

In politics we have never had much of a feminist movement because in our society the problem of equal rights had never arisen. However, under British rule Burma was considered part of India and we were governed according to the same constitution. In 1927, therefore, we did have a little bit of a feminist movement to abolish the clause which provided that women could not stand for election to the

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Legislative Council. We Burmese women took it for granted that this disqualification clause should be deleted, so we thought we would have a token demonstration. About ten of us sent out an appeal to the women of Rangoon to join in showing our support for a resolution introduced in the Legislative Council for the deletion of the sex-disqualification clause. More than a hundred women came to the office of the Rangoon City Corporation (of which we were allowed to be members) and we marched with banners and placards to the Legislative Council, followed through the streets by a large crowd of spectators.

We were amazed to discover that the British officials were not very keen about women getting into the Legislature. We assumed that it must be the British Government that made the objection because they knew that the women who would seek election were bound to back the nationalists. Several of us were warned against joining the demonstration. I was called up twice by certain officials and was told that it would be to my detriment to make this protest. When our procession set out we found the streets were heavily guarded by mounted police. The Secretariat building has four gates, and when we reached it we found that three of them were closed, chained and padlocked. At the fourth a mounted policeman gave us a letter from the Commissioner of Police telling us to disperse. We broke up quite peacefully, certain that we had made our point.

I think that ours was one of the first political demonstrations in Burma, and although we were not immediately successful, our feminist feeling lasted only two years. In 1929 a woman was elected for the first time to the Legislature. Since then we have had no trouble, and at the present moment we have six women members in parliament.

3

With this degree of freedom and equality in our public life, how does it happen that Burmese women seem, within the family, to accept a subservient position? In this I think, perhaps, that appearances are rather deceptive to the foreigner. In Burmese society we have never had the kind of parties and entertainments that are usual in the West. We have, of course, our own amusements — a *shinpyu* ceremony or a big wedding party or something like that — at which we meet. In the cities, especially Rangoon, where "Western-style parties" are beginning to be part of our life, we are apt to carry over our own social habits. The men will sit together and the women will sit together because it is assumed that they have more to say to one another. At a big dinner party or an informal picnic, it is quite customary to feed the men first because we know that on the whole they are the busy ones who may have an appointment or work that they must fulfill. We take this still further — even if a woman has a job or a profession, when her husband is transferred to another place or post, she will leave her work and start again in the place where he is assigned. We like to give precedence to our men in our own homes because we acknowledge them, until their death, as head of the household. Possibly we can afford to offer them this courtesy because we are secure in our rights and status. But part of the deference we offer them stems from the influence of Buddhism in our country. We believe that when a new Buddha comes to the world it will be as a man (though, to be sure, one of us who is now a woman may, in a later life, be born as a man and eventually progress to Buddhahood). We feel that this gives men an inherent superiority: mentally, they can reach higher than women.

However, much of what appears to be a retiring attitude among Burmese women in their social life is actually explained by the difference of Burmese manners from Western manners. In the West the tradition of chivalry (in however diluted a form) dictates many of the surface attitudes to women. We have no such tradition in Burma, but I don't think that our women feel inferior as a result. They have considerable authority in the home — they usually handle the family finances, for instance — and in many ways more freedom than Western women. Because of our family system, there are nearly always cousins or sisters or aunts or other relatives who live in the household. This means that there is always someone in the family to take care of the children and the mother is free to have a job or profession outside the home. The children, meanwhile, are taught at an early age to help in the house and in their mother's work outside. You will, for example, often find a girl of seven or eight sitting with her mother in a shop, learning how to sell the goods or helping out during a busy time.

As the girls grow older, it may seem to a Westerner that they lead a rather restricted life. It is not customary among us for a girl to go out alone after she is sixteen or seventeen. She will go out with her aunt or her mother, or she may go to the pictures with her friends, but there will be no question of "dating" in the Western sense. In the universities the boys may pay calls on the girls in their dormitory, or a group of them may go for a walk together, but even this is considered a Western institution. However, in our own terms, a Burmese girl has a good deal of freedom before marriage and we have no form of purdah for our women. Naturally there would not be the high percentage of love marriages that we have in this country if the boys and girls had no opportunity to meet and get to know each other.

In the old days — before we had clocks — we used to have special names for different moments of the day. The early morning was "the cock-crowing time," or we would speak of "the sunset

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time." In the same way the late afternoon was "go courting time." It is clear from this that the courting system is an old one in Burma, and, as in just about everything else, the Burmese woman has, by tradition, been accorded certain rights and privileges in this matter too. Even now it is a custom to go courting. Two or three boys will go together to a girl's house where she will receive them. They will eat some fruit and sweetmeats, or have tea and a smoke — and talk. Then they may go off to call on another girl in the same way. Introductions can be made in this manner and friendships can grow. Besides this, there are plenty of appropriate occasions in Burmese social life for boys and girls to meet. There are pagoda festivals and big picnics, there are family visits to other houses and there are sports. Apart from foreign sports like tennis and golf, and international sports like swimming, there are many Burmese games. In the villages, particularly, you will see boys and girls playing together the old games such as *Phan-gon-dan*, a kind of leapfrog, or *Gonnhyin-tho-de*, which is played with a big seed. After they have outgrown the childhood games they continue to meet at the kind of sport that we have specially for full moon nights when the groups divide into two sides, draw lines on the ground and then try to catch each other whenever anyone steps into "neutral territory."

Altogether, in our social life as well as in our public life, we feel that we, as Burmese women, occupy a privileged and independent position. It is a position for which we are trained — almost imperceptibly, and with love and security — from childhood. It is a position which is not limited either by marriage or by motherhood, and which allows us, eventually, to fit ourselves into the life, the work, and all the rewards that our country has to offer equally with our men.

RICE POUNDING SONGS

After the rice harvest the women of a Burmese village gather to pound out the grains from the husks. As they work, they sing these traditional folk songs, which have been collected and translated by U Khin Zaw.

Set down the mortars, line them up neatly,
Girls of Shwe Naung, take up the pestle-stones;
Then sing we and chant it, merrily in time,
As gracefully we pound away.

What means that noise, that bustle we hear?
Oh, a lady of Shwe Naung is giving alms,
With the music of drums and gongs.

There is red-gold radiance over there;
Perhaps the sun has risen.
No, it's the dyed robes of the monks
On their rounds with their begging bowls.
Come, fill them with alms-food!

This *chickrassia* which I planted,
Isn't it lovely? Tiny buds on slender stems.
But if you pluck them before they flower,
My plant will wither away, you know.

Hey there, maiden at the loom,
What cloth are you weaving?
Oh, need you ask, in these thin times?
It's a cotton coverlet for me

I live in a house of teak,
Bright at night with torches.
It's true, my parents are rich;
Yet if you dare not come yourself,
You can at least send a letter.

The poor man is moping in the house,
Feeling out of sorts and shaky
Because he's short of opium.
Very well, wry topknot,
Sell my fine gold earplugs if you must,
But make sure you get a good price for them!

My handsome brother, a word with you
Before you leave for lower country;
If you find a wife there do not leave her,
Bring her to us, we've use for her.
She can fetch us water, gather firewood,
And pound our rice — oh, lots of uses!

I've bought a pair of sandals,
Such pretty red sandals.
But I shan't wear them yet.
When you and I are truly wedded,
Then, I shall wear them.

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THE CONCEPT OF NEUTRALISM

What Lies Behind Burma's Foreign Policy

by JAMES BARRINGTON

1

UNFORTUNATELY for the Union of Burma, her emergence as an independent State coincided with the onset of that product of the nuclear age, the cold war. Since the cold war has dominated the international scene, either by drawing other international issues into its orbit so completely as to make them lose their original identity, or by reducing them to relative insignificance, it is not surprising that Burma's foreign policy, like that of every other State, should today tend to be judged by its attitude towards the cold war. Applying the terminology of war to the cold war, the States which, like Burma, refuse to take sides in the cold war have come to be known as the "neutrals." Later, when it became clear that the terminology of war did not quite fit the circumstances of the cold war, attempts were made to find a more apt description. Hence the evolution of the terms "uncommitted" and "unaligned." But these are only slight refinements of the original term "neutral." None of them provides a completely accurate description of the foreign policy of the Union of Burma — which is far more than a mere attitude, or a series of unrelated reactions to successive international issues.

The basic content and continuity of Burma's foreign policy has its roots firmly embedded in the nation's past history. It must be recalled that Burma was one of the very last countries in Asia to fall under foreign domination. Although the piecemeal absorption of Burma in the British Empire began in 1823, the Burmese Kingdom remained as an independent political entity until 1885. The territorial losses of 1823 and of 1852, though extremely large, were regarded as temporary in nature, and had nothing like the same effect on the Burmese people as the liquidation of the Kingdom in 1885. This date, 1885, is significant. It points up the fact that Burma did not lose her independence until a hundred years after the United States had won her freedom, and that it was lost at a time when anticolonial forces were already stirring in the world, and when Burmese nationalism was already being kindled. The loss of independence was therefore particularly keenly felt by the Burmese people, and its restoration became an immediate objective. Thus the entire period of British rule after 1885 was in effect a continuous fight for independence. As the struggle intensified, so developed the yearning for independence — independence from the British in the first instance since they were the controlling power, but as later events with the Japanese proved, independence from any and everybody. When therefore, on January 4, 1948, Burma once again became a sovereign independent state, the people were united in the determination that they should never again lose the precious independence which they had just regained. Today, ten years later, the feeling is no less strong.

Genuine independence in Burmese minds is synonymous with an independent foreign policy. The reason for this is quite simple. To the great credit of the British, it must be admitted that they gave Burma progressive doses of "home rule," culminating in full internal autonomy in 1937. But right till the end, the British Government retained

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control of Burma's foreign affairs, with which was linked external defense. Thus the ability of a nation to make its own foreign policy decisions, without outside domination or pressure, became in the eyes of the Burmese people the test of independence. It remains so today. Any suspicion that the Government had accepted the dictation of another country or group of countries, or that it had succumbed to pressure, would immediately put the Government in trouble. This is one reason why the Union of Burma steadfastly refuses to join either bloc in the cold war. Prime Minister U Nu made the reasons for this position abundantly clear when he said before the National Press Club in Washington in July, 1955:

> . . . in the present circumstances of Burma, her membership in any alliance with a great-power military bloc is incompatible with her continued existence as an independent State. This may seem to be putting it strongly, but it is a fact. Our recent history is such, our experience with great powers is such, that in the minds of the people of Burma an alliance with a big power immediately means domination by that power. It means the loss of independence. You may question the validity of that belief. But perhaps you will accept my statement that it is a political fact of life today that any Government of Burma which aligned itself with a big-power bloc would at once lose the confidence and support of the people.

Here U Nu was speaking with special reference to the great-power blocs. But it should be emphasized that independence means complete independence, independence even from those countries which happen to adopt a line similar to the Union of Burma's in international affairs. Burma's independence in foreign policy is therefore total, and is not directed against any country or group of countries. Her attitude toward the two blocs in the cold war simply fits into this total framework.

2

This determination to follow an independent policy does not mean that Burma adopts an attitude of blind neutrality toward all international issues except those in which she has a direct interest. She realizes that isolationism, which was the basis of nineteenth-century neutralism, no longer provides a safe refuge for any nation in the circumstances of today, and that there is no running away from the problems of the world. If proof were needed of this, it is provided by the fact that the first major move of the Union of Burma in the international field was to join the United Nations. There is thus all the difference between Burma's brand of neutrality, and the neutrality of the nineteenth century. Since there is no getting away from the world, we have decided that the best course for us to adopt is to maintain friendly relations with all other nations, to interest ourselves in the problems which beset this planet, and to help find solutions to them from our position of independence which we believe enables us best to judge each issue strictly on its merits. Thus Burma's neutrality is not neutrality as between right and wrong. It is neutrality in the sense that in an extended conflict in which neither side is absolutely right nor absolutely wrong, she refuses to line up absolutely with either side. Thus, her policy of judging each individual issue as it arises strictly on its merits causes her to vote sometimes with one side and sometimes with the other, or to abstain where the issue is not a clear-cut one. This is very far from the "plague on both your houses" attitude which we are sometimes accused of adopting toward the two blocs in the cold war.

Independence, then, is the driving force behind Burma's foreign policy. It furnishes the explanation for most of the attitudes which Burma has adopted on international issues. From it stems her strong opposition to colonialism in any form. We realize however that to remain independent Burma must build up her strength. Unless she does so, independence would become nothing but an empty slogan. The most urgent need is for her to strengthen her economic and social foundations. And in order that she may do this the Union needs peace above all else.

Burma was twice a major battleground in World War II. In between the two major campaigns, she was continuously in the front line of war. The material damage which she suffered was so enormous that today, twelve years after the conclusion of the war, the work of reconstruction is still incomplete. Staggering as this is, it is only part of the problem which confronts the country. Much more serious than the material destruction, and much more difficult to repair, is the psychological damage which the war inflicted on the people of Burma. Many of the problems which we have had to face in the past nine years are an aftermath of the war. The Government, using democratic means, is straining every resource not only to overcome these problems, but at the same time to forge ahead in the economic and social fields. Two gigantic tasks have been telescoped into one, constituting a challenge such as few governments have faced. We are a nation in a great hurry. If the outcome is successful, a bright future is ensured; if it fails, the Union's future will be imperiled. If at this stage, while Burma is still grappling with the legacies of World War II, she were to become involved in another war, the further damage which she would suffer would almost certainly put recovery quite beyond her reach. And even if, by some miracle, she managed to stay out of the war, the general devastation which the war would bring would undoubtedly envelop Burma, and produce the same effect.

Burma needs peace because another war could mean her death. And peace promises more than

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bare survival; it would give the people of Burma the chance really to begin to live. Together with most of the countries of Asia, Africa, and South America, Burma was passed over by the industrial revolution. Before she has had a chance to catch up with them, the more advanced countries of the world are already moving into the era of the atomic revolution, threatening to widen the gap which already exists between them and the underdeveloped countries. If independence is to have any meaning for Burma, it is absolutely imperative that she should be able rapidly to narrow this gap, bringing to her people an increasing measure of the benefits which modern science can provide. If true peace is to be established on this earth, it is equally imperative that the other underdeveloped countries should do the same. We all realize that we cannot do this by ourselves within the time that our people are prepared to wait. To meet the deadline, we need all the assistance we can get from outside, particularly from the technically advanced countries. Burma therefore welcomes all such assistance, subject only to one condition: the acceptance of assistance must not in any way compromise our independent foreign policy. Provided this condition is satisfied, we are prepared to accept assistance from any quarter; and in token of our gratitude we would like to make repayment, now or in the future, for all such assistance to the extent that our resources will permit. We know however that there is a direct relation between the availability of such assistance and the state of tension in the world. An outright shooting war would probably mean the end of everything. It is for this reason that it has become unthinkable. But from the viewpoint of progress, it is not enough to be able to prevent a shooting war. As long as the major powers continue to set aside more than half of their national budgets for defense purposes, it would be unrealistic to expect them to make available the kind and volume of assistance we all need. And as long as world tensions remain as high as they are, we cannot expect any substantial reduction in expenditure on armaments. Therefore Burma's own interests require that world tensions should be reduced.

It is this combination of factors which gives a very special quality to Burma's yearning for peace. I would not like to be misunderstood on this point. I do not suggest for a moment that there are any people in the world who do not want peace. I do suggest however that Burma's recent experiences, and the circumstances which attend her today, give peace a very special meaning for us. In this sense, Burma may be likened to a youth to whom life means more than to an older man. Not that the older man looks forward to death; it is merely that he is somewhat more resigned to it. This is not to say that Burma is prepared to buy peace at any price. She would certainly fight in certain circumstances — if her independence were threatened, for instance. Her ten-year-old war against her own Communists and other insurgents is proof of this. But perhaps it does mean that she might be prepared, within these limits, to go to greater lengths in her endeavors to prevent another war than countries which have not shared her experiences, and do not face the same problems.

Unfortunately for Burma, she has had to live under the constant threat of war ever since her re-emergence as an independent state. Without assigning blame or sitting in judgment, she has come to deplore the existence of military blocs because she firmly believes that the formation and growth of such blocs only add further to the tensions already existing in the world. Furthermore, she has enough faith in human nature to believe that in a choice between mutual extinction and some form of mutual accommodation or coexistence, man will finally come to choose the latter. The ever-growing frightfulness of modern weapons is slowly compelling the two blocs to seek such an accommodation, but they need to be helped along, and it is here that the "neutral," "uncommitted," "unaligned" nations serve a useful, and perhaps even an indispensable, purpose. Who can doubt that the world would today be much closer to a shooting war if every nation on earth were allied with one side or other in the cold war? Thus in the existing circumstances of the world, we believe that the greatest contribution that the Union of Burma can make to the maintenance of peace is to keep out of the blocs, and from this position of active neutrality to work for the reduction of tensions whenever opportunity affords. In other words, Burma's attitude toward war and peace powerfully reinforces her basic position of independence in international affairs.

Burma's foreign policy has been much misunderstood and subjected to severe criticism in the past. We have been accused of "sitting on the fence." The implication is that we are waiting to jump on to the winning side when it becomes clear which side is going to win. This is completely untrue. It is ruled out because it is immoral, and also for the very simple reason that we do not believe there can be any winner if the present conflict sharpens. Nor do we try to play off one bloc against the other, since this again would not only be immoral but would also be directly opposed to our objective of reducing tensions. The main objective of our foreign policy is simply to preserve our independence. For this we need peace, and we need co-operation among all nations. In other words, we recognize clearly that there is a close link between independence and interdependence. I have no doubt that Burma's foreign policy will continue to be criticized in the future. Indeed, it is only right and even good that it should be criticized. But if this article succeeds in removing at least some of the current misunderstandings regarding the Union of Burma's foreign policy, it will not have been written in vain.

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THE EARLY ART OF BURMA

Surviving Traditions from Pagan and Mandalay

by "THAW KA"

1

TRADITION records that some of his followers once asked the Lord Buddha what they might do to express their devotion to him. In reply, the Teacher spread out his square cloak upon the ground, placed his alms bowl upside down upon it, and held his staff like an axis above the spherical bowl. Today, after nearly 2,500 years, the Buddha's symbolic gesture is still repeated in the essential form — a square base, a rounded monument, and a thin spire — of the myriad pagodas which the faithful have built, and are still building, in Burma. And the Buddhist shrine, with its attendant sculpture, wood carving or painted decoration, is still the principal artistic expression and aesthetic experience of the Burmese people. To be sure, folk art and handicrafts have flourished in the villages, while tapestries, textiles, richly embroidered garments, and carved and gilded furniture were produced for the royal court at Mandalay, and, in this century, a very small school of secular painting has developed, but religious art and architecture remain dominant.

The pagoda is as much a part of the Burmese landscape as the rice paddy. In every village and along the river banks, wherever elevated ground near a settlement provides the opportunity for visible praise, the traveler will see pagodas, ranging from huge structures like the Shwedagon of Rangoon and the Shwemawdaw of Pegu, whose gilded *htis*, shining in the sunlight, can be seen from miles away, to little whitewashed shrines a few feet high which a peasant built himself near his home.

The Shwedagon (Plate 26), set on the highest hill in Rangoon, is the largest Buddhist temple of its kind in the world and a place of pilgrimage for Buddhists from many lands. First built soon after the Buddha's death to enshrine relics of his hair which Mon merchants had brought from India, it has been enlarged over the centuries until it now towers to a height of 326 feet. Worshipers take off their footwear and ascend to the pagoda by four covered stairways which face the cardinal points of the compass. In the arcades of these stairways, sellers of flower offerings and candles, of religious books and souvenirs, have their booths, and often, behind them, their living quarters. The entrances are guarded by pairs of symbolic figures, giant *chinthe* lions, fanciful and heraldic (as in Plate 12), with statues of fearful ogres and mythical alchemists behind them. Halfway up the slope a path runs all the way around the hill, where circumambulation can be a form of prayer.

The top of the hill has been leveled to form a great, paved terrace, where thousands may congregate. The main pagoda rises from the center of this platform and its outer edges are crowded with smaller shrines (Plate 17) housing figures of the Buddha, many of them set with jewels, and open-sided, richly carved zayats for rest or prayer. Here saffron-robed monks sit in meditation, give instruction, or lead prayer, while, before the different images, the faithful kneel to make obeisance, touching the forehead to the ground, presenting their offerings of flowers or food, and buy tins of water from the water-carriers to pour over the patient

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"THAW KA" *is a pseudonym for a distinguished Burmese art historian and research scholar in the field of archaeology who made available much valuable material to the staff writers who collaborated in the preparation of these articles.* U THEIN HAN, *a Burman, born in 1908, was Librarian of the University of Rangoon and now heads the textbook program of the Burma Translation Society. A leader of the* Khitsan *literary movement, he is recognized as an outstanding poet and essayist.*

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Buddha figures. Or they may purchase little packages of gold leaf and, climbing the sides of the pediment, reverently refurbish the gleaming surface.

Each detail of pagoda architecture, every molding and ornament, has its symbolic meaning. Around the great platform, five hundred small golden stupas represent the five hundred chief disciples who followed the Lord Buddha during his lifetime. The seven angular projections at the base of each stupa are the seven folds in the skirt of the Buddha's robe. The double band of lotus flowers on the bell-shaped cone signify the Teacher's Dhamma, the "way" of his doctrine. The soaring *hti* is both the Buddha's staff and the umbrella, which, in sun-baked lands, is always a perquisite of honor. Moreover, the *hti*, with its jewels and tiny golden bells, suggests the ascent of the Savior from the thirty-one planes of existence into the highest realm of heaven, the longed-for *parinirvana*, the abode of immortal peace. As the wind stirs the golden bells of the *hti* each sound is a prayer.

The foreigner who witnesses the impressive scene of devotion on the Shwedagon platform should not make the mistake of thinking the spectacle idolatrous. The people may "bow down unto a graven image," but the action is purely symbolical. To the best of his power, a Burmese seeks to model his life on that of the Buddha, in deed and aspiration. The very form of the pagoda helps him to keep ever in mind the ideals he desires to follow: square base, the Teacher's cloak; round central mass, the bowl for begging food; tapering *hti*, the pilgrim's staff — all symbolizing the life of ascetic renunciation. And many a Burmese will see in his temple's over-all form the person of the Buddha seated in meditation; compare, for example, the shape of the figure in Plate 25 with that of the Shwedagon in Plate 26.

2

While legend tells us that Buddhism first came to Burma from northern India, and the Tantric element in the religion of Pagan before King Anawrahta's reforms implies an overland link with Nepal and Tibet, there is much epigraphic and archaeological evidence to show that the sea traffic between Lower Burma and South India and Ceylon was responsible for a great share of the cultural importation. Thus while the excavated sculpture of the Pyus, a people who held sway around Prome in the seventh century, resembles that of the Gupta school of North India, Pyu inscriptions are like a Telugu-Kanarese script of South India.

And the Mon (or Talaing) people, who flourished south of the Pyus, with their capital at Thaton, near modern Moulmein, who had strong ties with the Khmer empire of Cambodia, built temples very like the typical Singhalese stupa and obtained a text of the *Tripitaka*, the orthodox scripture of Theravada Buddhism, written in Pali, from Ceylon.

Neither the Pyus nor the Mons were fated to become the unifiers of Burma — this destiny was reserved for the Burmans, who had migrated down from Tibet and China to the central plains around the Irrawaddy River near modern Mandalay — but, as it was with Greece and Rome, much of the culture of the conquered peoples was taken over and developed by the conquerors. And this explains the Indian and Singhalese architectural styles of the great temples of Pagan, capital of the proud and powerful Burmese civilization of the medieval period.

Time and neglect have dealt cruelly with Pagan over the centuries. The monsoon rains, treasure seekers, and foreign vandals posing as archaeologists have defaced frescoes and pilfered sculpture. But fortunately the Burma Archaeological Department is now protecting and restoring the finest monuments. No visitor to Burma should fail to make time for the five-day excursion by plane and river steamer to Pagan. At a deep bend of the Irrawaddy River, its five thousand surviving temples (Plate 7) spread over an area of sixteen square miles, a challenge to the imagination which rivals the lost glories of Luxor, Persepolis, or Angkor.

What driving energy could have produced this vast, richly adorned city? And why did the ancient kings build pagodas and monasteries rather than stone palaces? As Professor Kyaw Thet suggests, the economic basis of this high civilization was an extensive irrigation system. But its deeper stimulus, as we learn from the temple inscriptions, was the Buddhist faith. Not content with worldly success and victories in battle, each of the kings tried to outdo his forebears in raising shrines which would glorify the Lord Buddha and in so doing insure his own spiritual progress in later rebirths. Thus, in an inscription in the Shwegu Temple, we find this beautiful prayer, written in Pali verse, by King Alaungsithu (1112–1167):

> By this my gift, whatever boon I seek,
> It is the best of boons to profit all;
> By this abundant merit I desire
> Here or hereafter no angelic pomp
> Of Brahmas, Suras, Maras; nor the state
> And splendors of a monarch; nay, not even
> To be the pupil of a conqueror.
> But I would build a causeway sheer athwart
> The river of Samsara, and all folk
> Would speed across thereby until they reach
> The Blessed City. I myself would cross,
> And drag the drowning over. Aye, myself
> Tamed, I would tame the willful; comforted,
> Comfort the timid; wakened, wake the asleep;
> Cool, cool the burning; freed, set free the bound.

And Alaungsithu's predecessor, the conqueror and builder Kyanzittha (1084–1112), inscribed his edicts on massive pillars in this vein:

> O King of Devas, hear thou! . . . The sage Bisnu shall become the king Kyanzittha, and he shall uphold the religion of the Lord Buddha. . . . All vice, which is as a stench, shall the king utterly blot out

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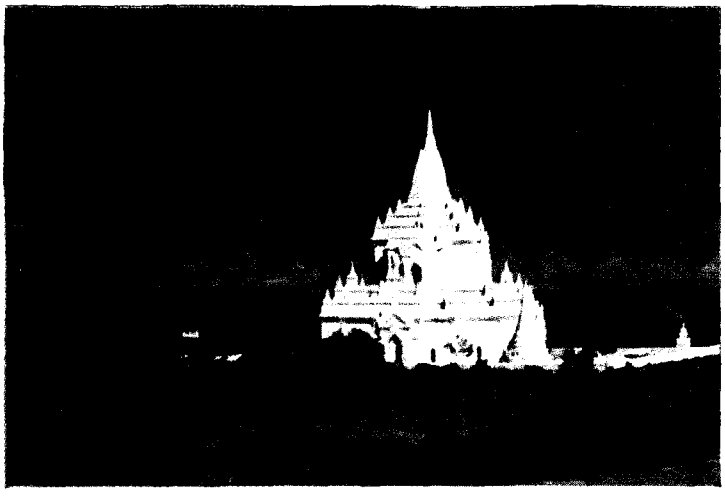
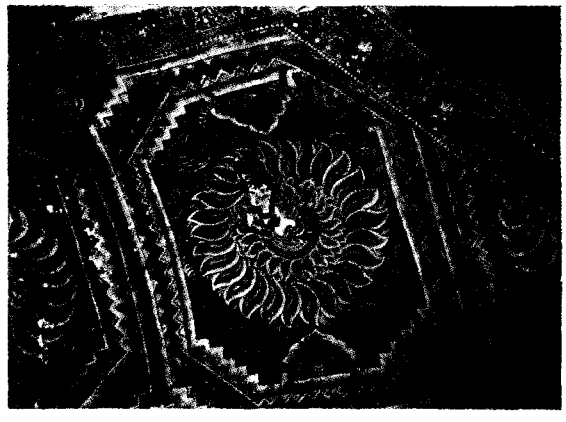


1. Gawdawpalin Temple, Pagan (Twelfth Century)

2. Eleventh-Century Figure of Buddha Kassapa, Ananda Temple, Pagan



3. Ceiling Fresco, Ananda Monastery, Pagan

4. Seventeenth-Century Fresco Ananda Monastery, Pagan

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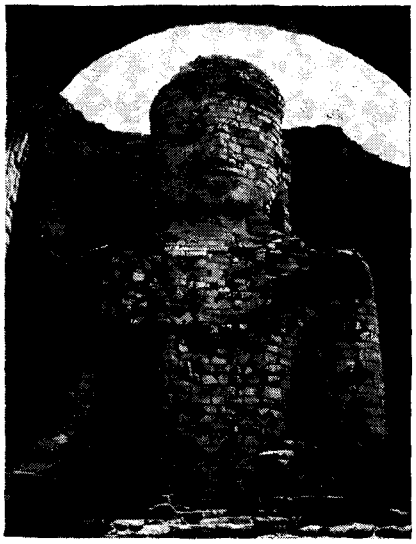


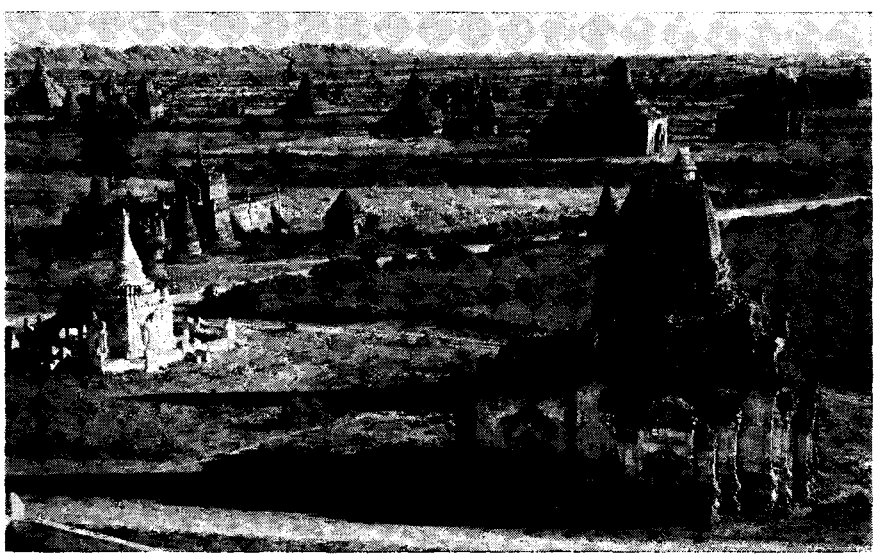
5. The Thandawgya Buddha
Pagan (A.D. 1284)

8. Scene from the Life of the Buddha
Ananda Temple, Pagan

6. The Mother of the Buddha
Ananda Temple, Pagan

9. Terra Cotta Votive
Plaque. Episodes in
Life of the Buddha
Found at Pagan

10. Gilded Stone Figure
of Shin Arahan
Ananda Temple, Pagan
(Eleventh Century)



7. A Few of the 5,000 Temples of Pagan

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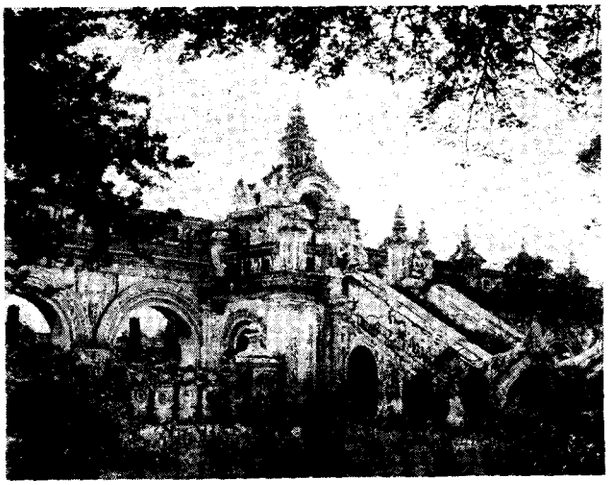
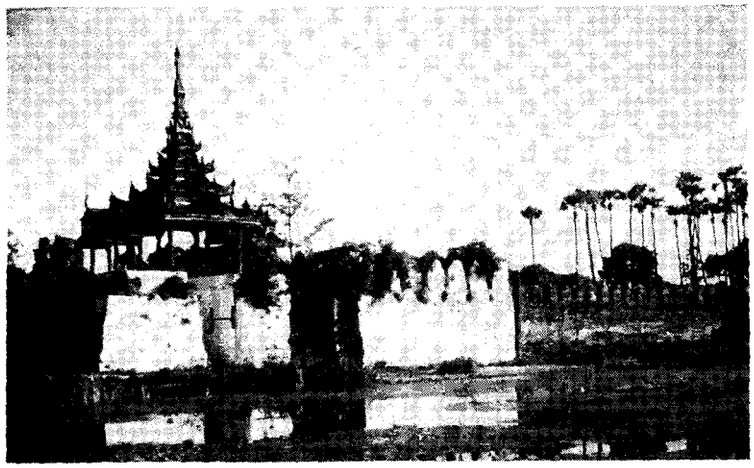


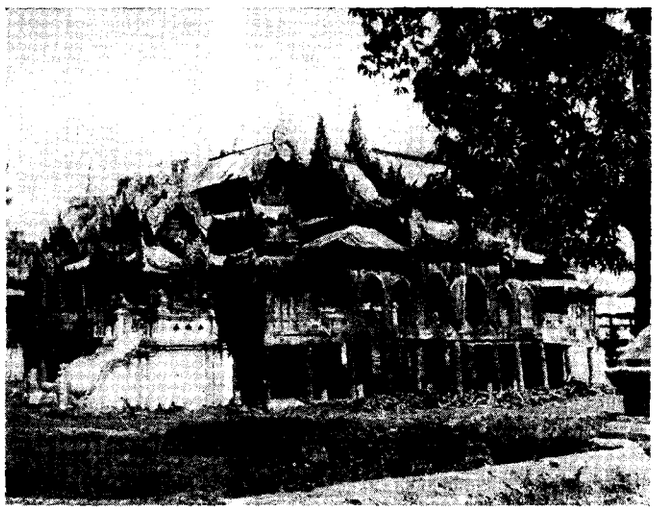
11. Atumashi Monastery, Mandalay
(Nineteenth Century)

12. *Chinthes* Guarding a Pagoda Entrance
Mandalay (Nineteenth Century)

13. Detail from a Bronze Bell
Mahamyatmuni Pagoda
Mandalay



14. One of the Moat Gates of the Palace at Mandalay



15. A Buddhist Monastery near
Inle Lake, Shan State

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16. Akyab Craftsmen: Pyre for the Cremation of a Phongyi (1957)

17. U San Win: *Festival Day Shwedagon Pagoda, Rangoon*
Collection Dr. Seth Spaulding, Rangoon

18. U Khin: *Widura and the Naga Queens* (1956)
Tapestry in Nineteenth-Century Mandalay style, made with Thai Silks and Sequins
Collection Mr. and Mrs. William L. Eilers, Rangoon

19. U Ba Kyi: *Duel between the Mon Hero Tha Mein Ba Ran and a Chinese General*
The National Gallery of Art, Rangoon

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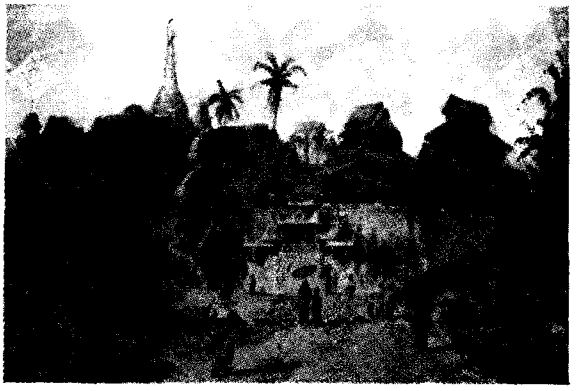
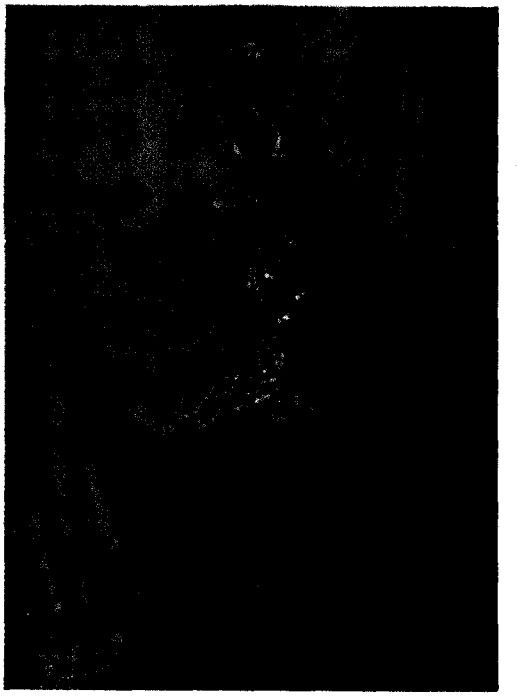
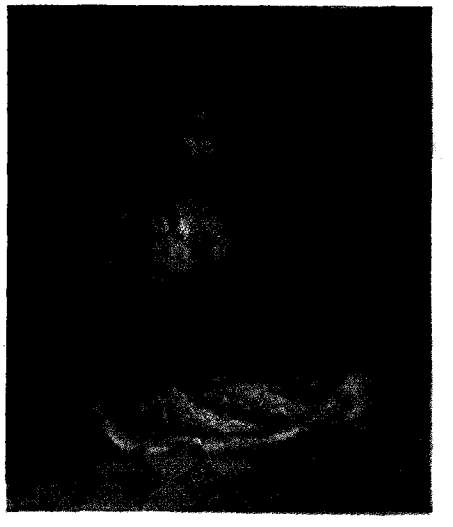


20. U Tin Aye: *Kyaikthanlan Pagoda, Moulmein*
Collection of the Artist, Rangoon

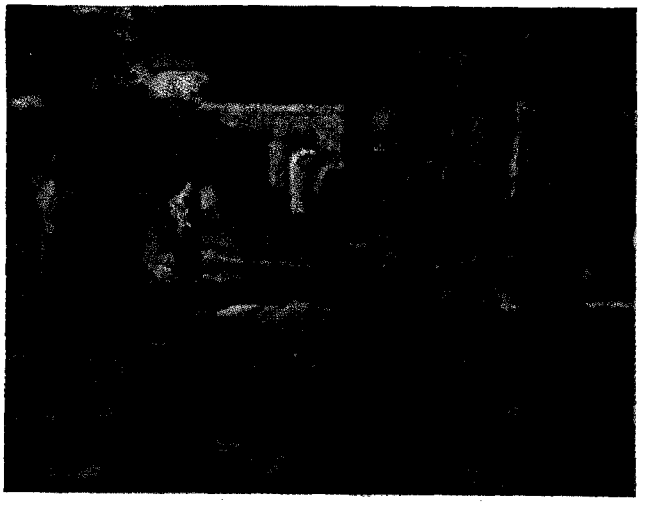


21. U Ohn Lwin: *The Dance of Ravana*
The National Gallery of Art, Rangoon

22. U Ngwe Gaing: *The Dancer*
Collection U Aung Myin, Rangoon



23. U San Win: *The Burmese Harp*
Collection U Aung Myin, Rangoon



24. U Ba Nyan: *Oxen Resting*
Collection Dr. Daw Yin May, Rangoon

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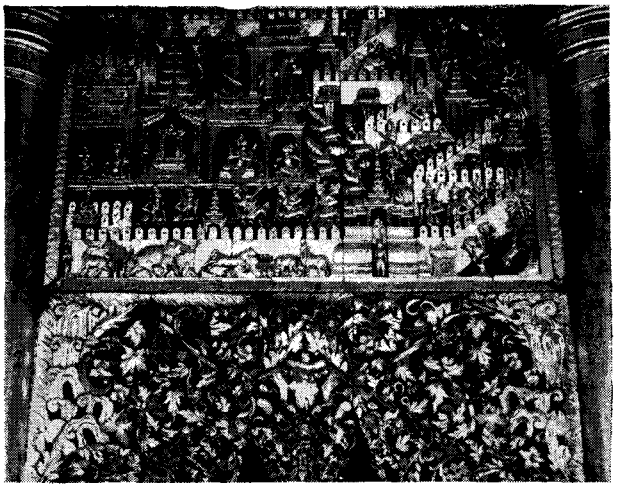
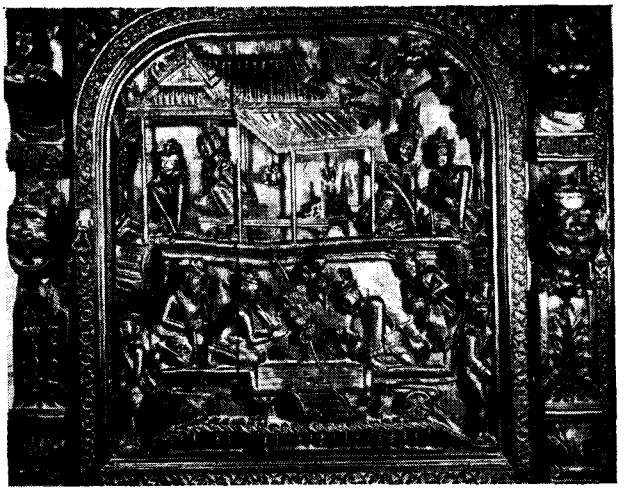
25. Modern Buddha Figure in a Pagoda

27. Woodcarving in Shwe Nandaw Monastery, Mandalay (Nineteenth Century)

26. Shwedagon Pagoda, Rangoon



28. Gilded Woodcarving in Shwedagon Pagoda Rangoon (Nineteenth Century)



29. Carved Furniture, President's Residence Rangoon (Nineteenth Century)

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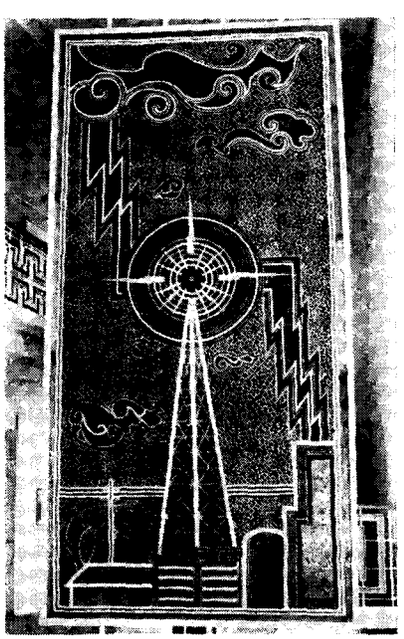
30. U San Win: *Transportation*
Mosaic for Technical High School, Rangoon

31. U Nann Waii: *Once Upon A Time*
Mosaic for Engineering College, Rangoon



32. U Ohn Lwin: *Electricity*
Mosaic for Engineering College
Rangoon

33. U Han Tin: *Old Woman*
(Plaster)

34. U San Pe: *The Abbot Hsunlun Sayadaw* (Bronze)

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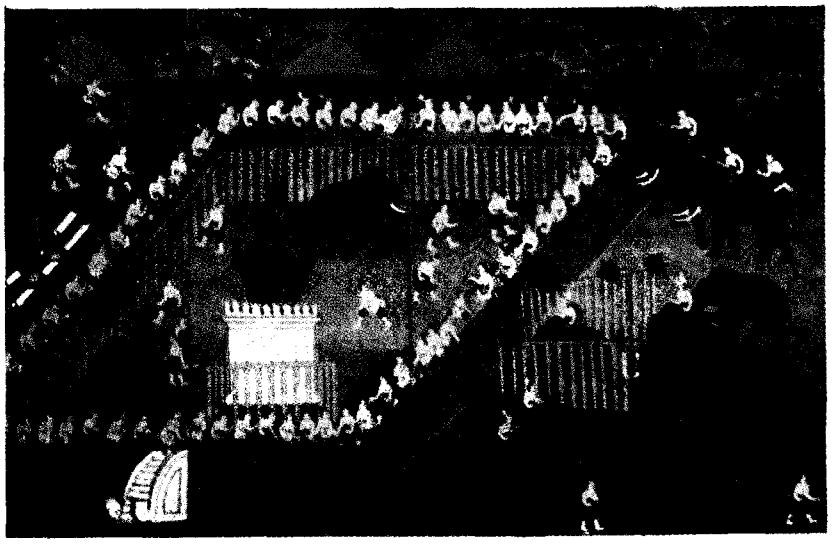
36. U Ngwe Gaing: *The Recluse in the Forest*
Collection U Hla Shain, Rangoon

35. U Aung Soe: *Dancers*
Collection of the Artist, Rangoon

37. U Hla Shain: *The Road in the Valley*
Collection of the Artist, Rangoon



38. *Training Elephants.* Book Illustration by a Nineteenth-Century Mandalay Artist
Collection U Thein Han, Rangoon

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> with true morality, which is as a perfume. . . . The tears of those who have lost their friends shall the king wipe away with the hand of loving-kindness. . . . With his right hand shall the king give boiled rice and bread to all the people, and with his left hand ornaments and wearing apparel to all men. . . . He shall soften the hearts of those who intend evil, and exhort those who speak evil to speak good. . . .

The spirit of these utterances is all the more remarkable when we consider that only a hundred years before the religion of Pagan had been in the hands of the debased Ari priests who had corrupted the Buddhism brought from Tibet with magical tricks, snake worship, and lewd Tantric rites. Two men accomplished this striking reformation: Kyanzittha's father, Anawrahta, and the evangelical monk Shin Arahan, who attracted the king by his holiness and became his chief adviser.

A gilded stone figure of Shin Arahan is still preserved in the Ananda Temple (Plate 10) and we see a face that is both saintly and strong with determination. Shin Arahan was a Mon who came north to Pagan from Thaton resolved to convert the Burmans to the pure form of Theravada Buddhism. He prevailed on King Anawrahta to banish the Aris and to send to Thaton for a set of the scriptures, the *Tripitaka*. When these were refused, Anawrahta marched south, successfully besieged Thaton, and returned to Pagan in triumph, leading the conquered king and thirty thousand of his subjects as prisoners, with the sacred books and relics carried on thirty-two white elephants.

Among the Mon captives were many craftsmen skilled in building and carving, and many monks learned in Buddhist lore. With them, the great age of the Pagan civilization came into being; with them, the neo-Indian culture of the Mons moved north and was adopted by the Burmans. The temples began to rise beside the Irrawaddy. While stone was available in the near-by hills and was used for sculpture, as well as for lintels and porticoes, the principal building materials were brick and, over it, a kind of stucco, which could be elaborately worked with decorative motifs. Whitewashed, this plaster-like surface gleams brilliantly in the sun, and the several large pagodas, such as the That-byinnyu, Gawdawpalin (Plate 1), and Ananda, which are kept up today as places of pilgrimage, present an extraordinary spectacle, scintillating like ice against the brown and green landscape.

Anawrahta's first structures were solid stupas, like those of Ceylon, built to enshrine holy relics. Tooth relics of the Buddha are housed in the largest monument of his reign, the Shwezigon, which is still in use for worship and much visited because it contains as well a sanctuary dedicated to the Nats (see Dr. Htin Aung's discussion of "Folk-Elements in Burmese Buddhism"), the old nature deities of the animistic cults for whom Anawrahta provided a rationalized place in the Buddhist hagiology.

Perhaps the most impressive of all the pagodas of Pagan is the great Ananda Temple, dedicated in 1091 by King Kyanzittha, and still maintained today, faithfully whitewashed and gilded by the devotees. The Ananda symbolizes the endless wisdom of the Buddha. To grasp the scale and magnificence of its architecture, let us study the details of its construction in a cross-section view of its elevation (Figure 1) and a sketch of its elaborate ground plan (Figure 2). Examining the elevation (as

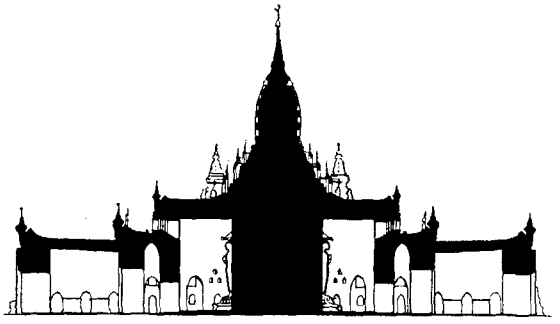

Figure 1: Cross section of the Ananda Temple

if we were X-raying the building from the side) we are struck first by its massive central core, a shaft of solid brick which rises to a height of 168 feet at the summit of the *hti*. How different from the structure of a Gothic cathedral or the sanctuary of a Muslim mosque, where the interior of the edifice would be entirely open under high vaulting or a dome. This inner solidity is the typical characteristic of many Indian temples, and it also recalls the pyramidal monuments of the Egyptians and the Aztecs.

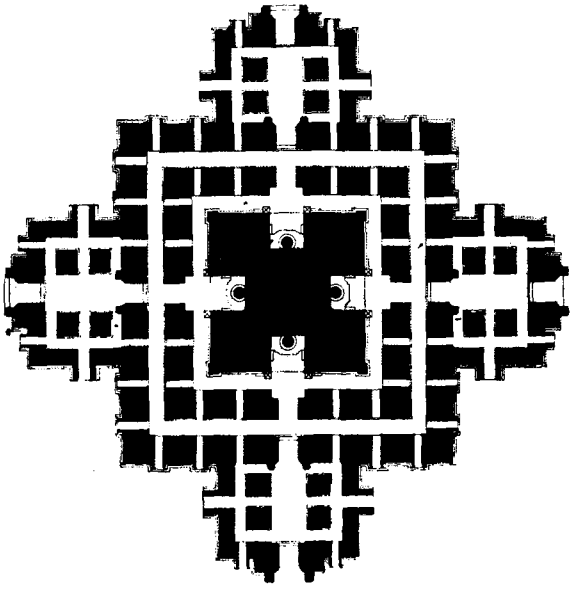

Figure 2: Ground plan of the Ananda Temple

Turning to the ground plan, we see a basic form like that of a Greek cross, two hundred feet each way along the axis, which is honeycombed with tunnel-like ogee-vaulted corridors and narrow aisles

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which admit light from the entrances and windows in the exterior walls. The circles on four sides of the central shaft mark the position of the principal images of the sanctum, four standing figures of Buddha, each thirty-one feet high (Plate 2). These gilded statues are highly dramatized by beams of natural light brought down from above through shafts in the roof. Many smaller Buddhas are enshrined in niches throughout the pagoda, and on the walls of the larger square of corridors are eighty bas-reliefs which tell the story of Lord Buddha's life on earth from his birth to the attainment of supreme wisdom (Plates 6 and 8).

The large gabled vestibules of the Ananda are guarded by *chinthes* and topped by graceful cornices of lotus petals bordered with pearls. Subsidiary entrances and windows are crowned with similar cornices. Five hundred glazed terra cotta tiles ornament the basement plinth and receding terraces of the exterior, each with a Mon or Pali inscription explaining the episode portrayed from the *Jataka* stories of the Buddha's earlier incarnations. The Ananda is a masterpiece of Mon taste, but, in its overall structure, it clearly shows the influence of the Indian temples of Bengal, such as the Paharpur, a tenth-century Buddhist shrine and monastery.

But no mere architectural description can do justice to the artistic impact on the beholder, the spiritual quality, of the temples of Pagan. As Professor Gordon Luce has written, to go from the outer blaze of tropic sunlight to the dim, cool interior is a never-to-be-forgotten experience. "The mysterious gloom and height of the shrine arching from floor to sikhara, the walls closing like four great petals above the Buddha and his worshipper, inspire awe and devotion."

The palaces and homes of old Pagan were built of wood and have perished, but a few other buildings in brick and stone such as a library, an ordination hall and monasteries have survived, and in some of these, as well as in the temples, we may trace the evolution of a highly developed art of mural painting. Fine examples of the early Mon fresco style are to be found in one of Kyanzittha's eleventh-century temples, the Nagayon. Here, in a color palette of dark red, yellow, and faded blue, with bold areas of black and white, the painting ranges from *Jataka* scenes as small as the illuminations of palm-leaf manuscripts to guardian figures that are more than life-size. On the main walls are kings and courtiers, processions of elephants and horses, deities and simple worshipers, each episode explained by a band of writing in Mon script. Contours and flat fabrics are defined by heavy black lines; figures are stylized and majestic. Those representing persons of greater importance are large in proportion to the others, and wear haloes. There is no linear nor atmospheric perspective, no modeling in light and shade. Men with black beards and Mon faces are impressive symbols rather than actual portraits.

These early frescoes are badly damaged and difficult to photograph, but in the Upali Thein ordination hall and the monastery near the Ananda Temple, where the mural work dates from a much later dynasty which restored some of the Pagan buildings in the seventeenth century, we find bright, well-preserved colors. Here the themes are often secular and the spirit far from somber. Take a magnifying glass to Plate 3 and you will find a gay and sophisticated little guardian Nat dancing in the middle of the symbolic lotus blossom! Intricate patterns of leaves and flowers cover large areas of wall and ceiling with lively decoration in which red, pink, and green are dominant. The pictorial content is still, most often, drawn from the life of the Buddha, but his story has been transposed to the contemporary scene, and we have vivid glimpses of palace and village architecture, of court etiquette or the easy-going amusements of the populace (Plate 4), of water processionals and parades of horses, elephants, soldiers, and farmers. There is a Chinese influence in these later paintings with their cloud scrolls, rock formations, and an angle of perspective which looks down from above on the rooftops of cities.

The Tartars of Kublai Khan laid waste the city in 1287, and Pagan then came under the domination of Shan chieftains who did not maintain its high culture. New dynasties of Burmese kings established new capitals at Ava, Shwebo, and Amarapura, but in the succeeding centuries of internecine struggle the arts did not flourish. It was only in 1857 when the powerful King Mindon moved his court to Mandalay that a renaissance took place. The monuments of Mandalay continue the architectural traditions of Pagan, but with marked indications of influences from abroad. The lightness and rounded arching of the Atumashi Monastery (Plate 11) suggest some contact with European styles, while the multiple roofs of the Royal Palace were distinctly Chinese in feeling. The main palace buildings were destroyed in World War II, but the majestic outer wall with its towered gates along the broad moat (Plate 14) is still standing.

Mindon's and Thibaw's palaces were set on stone foundations, but built of teak, the wood being intricately carved and often gilded. Plate 27 shows a typical detail of this carving, from what is now the Shwe Nandaw Monastery, originally one of the palace halls. And the example of carved furniture (Plate 29) is from about the same period, as is the monastery near Inle Lake in the Shan State (Plate 15). The court costumes of this epoch were magnificently embroidered, glass was used for brilliant mosaics, and walls were hung with sequin-studded tapestries (see the cover of this collection, and Plate 18 for a modern copy of the traditional tapestry style). Craftsmanship in lacquerwork was revived, and these graceful household pieces, with their delicate designs in gold, cinnabar, and green, are still the most popular form of folk art in Burma.

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The British annexed Upper Burma in 1885 and there was no longer a royal court to provide patronage for the arts. To their great credit, the British catalogued our archaeological sites and attempted to preserve the finest of them, but, except for individual collectors, there was little formal encouragement of art. However, the glories of the past lived on in the pagodas of city and countryside.

CONTEMPORARY BURMESE ART

by U Thein Han

The frescoes of Pagan are more a spiritual than a technical influence on our contemporary Burmese painters, who no longer have large wall surfaces on which to paint. Actually, the transition to smaller scale began when the art of papermaking was introduced from China. Large sheets were folded backward and forward, like a fan, and the strips were painted on with lampblack or Chinese ink, chalk, vermilion, indigo, and yellow orpiment. These illustrated folding books were called *parabaiks*, and their subjects ranged from Buddhist themes such as the *Jataka* stories and splendid court ceremonials to more everyday scenes such as a monk at the gate of a monastery, a festival dancer, a weaver at her loom, a trader in the market, or a mahout on his elephant. Plate 38 is a good example of this *parabaik* school of painting in the nineteenth century.

Two Italian artists spent some time at the court of Mandalay, but it seems more probable that Western art made its first real impact on us by way of illustrations in British books and magazines, and perhaps also from the pictorial labels on imported goods. It was only in the 1920's that Western-style oil painting was enthusiastically taken up by our artists after two gifted young Burmese, U Ba Nyan and U Ba Zaw, had been enabled to study in England. Returning to Burma, they rendered our native scene in oil and water color, popularizing the style of conservative British landscape artists. (See Plate 24: U Ba Nyan's *Oxen Resting*.)

U Ba Zaw died in 1943 and U Ba Nyan in 1945, but several very talented younger men have followed in their footsteps. One of the best known is U Ba Kyi, who has a distinguished historical style (Plate 19), as well as a humorous eye for the lighter side of Burmese character in the paintings he has done for Rangoon's Strand Hotel. U Ngwe Gaing is executing a series of large historical panels, but perhaps his power shows to better advantage in easel works such as the romantic *Recluse in the Forest* (Plate 36) or the graceful portrait of one of our classical dancers (Plate 22)

U Hla Shain's delicate landscapes (Plate 37) belie his protestations that he is only an amateur. U Ohn Lwin makes his living as a commercial artist, but, in his serious vein, he has successfully explored our cultural heritage. His *Dance of Ravana* (Plate 21) depicts one of the dance forms which came to Burma from Thailand in the eighteenth century. U Tin Aye (Plate 20) is a sensitive and accomplished water colorist.

In landscapes whose contrasts of light and shade sometimes recall the impressionism of Monet, and in occasional figures, U San Win (Plates 17 and 23) has shown his mastery of the tonal values of color. It is interesting to note that U San Win now directs an extensive program for teaching art in our schools. Such government support of art is very encouraging to our artists because, since the end of the monarchy, there has been far too little private patronage. Few wealthy Burmese collect art or decorate their homes with paintings. So our artists have welcomed the founding of a National Gallery, the establishment of art schools in Rangoon and Mandalay, and art instruction in schools which will educate the public to appreciate art and perhaps even to *buy* it. And they are grateful for recent commissions to decorate the handsome new buildings — most of them designed in very modern style by British architects — which are rising in Rangoon. U Ba Kyi has done murals for the magnificent new Rangoon Air Terminal, and U San Win (Plate 30), U Nann Waii (Plate 31), and U Ohn Lwin (Plate 32) have executed large mosaics for some of our new schools and colleges.

"Modern" art, such as is now in vogue in the West, has not yet arrived in Burma. Our public is not yet ready for abstraction, let alone nonobjectivism. But several of our youngest painters, among them U Nann Waii and U Aung Soe (Plate 35), have been exposed to the new trends and, without much encouragement as yet, are experimenting with less representational forms. And some of the sculpture done for new buildings is also abstract, though the pieces by U Han Tin (Plate 33) and U San Pe of Taunggyi (Plate 34) which are illustrated here are far more typical of what is acceptable in Burma today.

So much for what might be called our "secular" art movement. As "Thaw Ka" has pointed out, the mainstream of our art — at least in terms of quantity and mass appreciation — still flows in religious channels. And beside it goes the calm, unbroken flow of folk art and crafts — wood and ivory carving; gilding; silver work and work in copper and brass; embroidery and tapestry (Plate 18); weaving, basketry, canework, toys; and the remarkable lacquerware.

Compared with the artistic wonders of Pagan, I must confess that Burmese contemporary art sometimes seems uninspired. There is a rather deadly monotony of theme in most of our art shows — innumerable pagodas, innumerable huts, an endless series of river and village scenes. But our artists are gaining both confidence and technical skill; some of them may soon surprise us.

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THE MEANING OF BUDDHISM

Fundamental Principles of the Theravada Doctrine

by BHIKKHU U THITTILA

1

THE TEACHING founded by the Buddha is known, in English, as Buddhism. It may be asked, who is the Buddha? A Buddha is one who has attained Bodhi; and by Bodhi is meant wisdom, an ideal state of intellectual and ethical perfection which can be achieved by man through purely human means. The term *Buddha* literally means *enlightened one*, a *knower*. Buddhists believe that a Buddha is born in each aeon of time, and our Buddha — the sage Gotama who attained enlightenment under the bo tree at Buddh Gaya in India — was the seventh in the succession.

Gotama was born the son of an Indian king on the border of modern Nepal 623 years before Christ. The wise men of the kingdom foresaw that he would become either an emperor or a Buddha, and his father, wanting him to be an emperor, kept him utterly secluded from all unpleasant things, so that he might not become wise by seeing life. But the gods knew that Gotama must become the Buddha, and so they visited earth in various forms to let him see them. On three successive days, while on his way to the royal park, Gotama saw an old man, a sick man, and a corpse, and thus he learned that men — all men — must suffer and die. On the fourth day he saw a monk; from this he understood that to learn the way of overcoming man's universal sorrow he must give up worldly pleasures. Accordingly, in his twenty-ninth year, he renounced his kingdom and became an ascetic.

Gotama wandered about the countryside, a seeker after truth and peace. He approached many a distinguished teacher of his day, but none could give him what he sought. He strenuously practiced all the severe austerities of monkish life, hoping to attain Nirvana. Eventually his delicate body was reduced almost to a skeleton. But the more he tormented his body the further away he was from his goal. Realizing the futility of self-mortification, he finally decided to follow a different course, avoiding the extremes of pain and indulgence.

The new path which he discovered was the Middle Way, the Eightfold Path, which subsequently became part of his teaching. By following this path his wisdom grew into its fullest power, and he became the Buddha.

As a man Prince Gotama, by his own will, love, and wisdom, attained Buddhahood — the highest possible state of perfection — and he taught his followers to believe that they might do the same. Any man, within himself, possesses the power to make himself good, wise, and happy.

All the teachings of the Buddha can be summed up in one word: Dhamma. It means truth, that which really is. It also means law, the law which exists in a man's own heart and mind. It is the principle

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of righteousness. Therefore the Buddha appeals to man to be noble, pure, and charitable not in order to please any Supreme Deity, but in order to be true to the highest in himself.

Dhamma, this law of righteousness, exists not only in a man's heart and mind, it exists in the universe also. All the universe is an embodiment and revelation of Dhamma. When the moon rises and sets, the rains come, the crops grow, the seasons change, it is because of Dhamma, for Dhamma is the law of the universe which makes matter act in the ways revealed by our studies of natural science.

If a man will live by Dhamma, he will escape misery and come to Nirvana, the final release from all suffering. It is not by any kind of prayer, nor by any ceremonies, nor by any appeal to a God, that a man will discover the Dhamma which will lead him to his goal. He will discover it in only one way — by developing his own character. This development comes only through control of the mind and purification of the emotions. Until a man stills the storm in his heart, until he extends his loving-kindness to all beings, he will not be able to take even the first step toward his goal.

Thus Buddhism is not a religion at all, in the sense in which the word is commonly understood. It is not a system of faith or worship. In Buddhism, there is no such thing as belief in a body of dogma which must be taken on faith, such as belief in a Supreme Being, a creator of the universe, the reality of an immortal soul, a personal savior, or archangels who are supposed to carry out the will of the Supreme Deity. Buddhism begins as a search for truth. The Buddha taught that we should believe only that which is true in the light of our own experience, that which conforms to reason and is conducive to the highest good and welfare of all beings. Men must rely on themselves. Even though he may "take refuge in Buddha," the expression used when a man pledges himself to live a righteous life, he must not fall victim to a blind faith that the Buddha can save him. The Buddha can point out the path, but he cannot walk it for us.

The truth which the Buddhist sees when he looks around him is the truth of cause and effect. Every action, no matter how insignificant, produces an effect; every effect in its turn becomes a cause and produces still further effects. It is meaningless to inquire for a First Cause. A First Cause is inconceivable; rather, cause and effect are cyclical, and this universe when it dies and falls apart will give rise to another universe, just as this one was formed from the dispersed matter of a previous universe. The origin of the universe, like that of every individual person or thing in it, is dependent on the chain of previous causes, which goes on and on in an endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. This is the principle of dependent origination.

What of the soul? The Buddha taught that there is no soul or self, and he used the metaphor of the cart. If you take away the wheels and axles, the floorboards and sides, the shafts, and all the other parts of the cart, what remains? Nothing but the conception of a cart, which will be the same when a new cart is built. So the uninterrupted process of psychophysical phenomena moves from life to life. Each life passes instantaneously in death to a new life, and the new life is the effect of the causes in the old life. A candle flame at this instant is different from the flame that burned an instant ago, yet the flame is continuous.

Thus in the chain of interdependent causation all phenomenal existence is constantly changing. The elements combine and recombine with no underlying substance, or soul, to give them permanence. This is the Wheel of Life. The main cause of the restlessness, the suffering, which is the lot of beings turning on the Wheel of Life, is craving or selfish desire for existence, and it is this desire which sets the life force in motion. Desire is manifested in action. This action is in reality volition or will power, which is responsible for the creation of being. It is called karma in Sanskrit, but in the Pali language, which the Buddha spoke and in which all the Buddhist scriptures were written, it is softened to kamma.

2

In this universe in which nothing is permanent all change is governed by kamma or the kammic force. Kamma means action. In its general sense, kamma means all good and bad actions. Kamma refers to all kinds of intentional actions whether mental, verbal, or physical, that is, all thoughts, words, and deeds. In its ultimate sense kamma means all moral and immoral volition.

Kamma, though it activates the chain of cause and effect, is not determinism, nor is it an excuse for fatalism. The past influences the present, but does not dominate it. The past is the background against which life goes on from moment to moment; the past and the present influence the future. Only the present moment exists, and the responsibility for using the present moment for good or ill lies with each individual.

Every action produces an effect; it is cause first and effect afterward. We therefore speak of kamma as "the law of cause and effect." If you throw a stone into a pond, the ripples spread out to the shore, but that is not all, for the ripples return inward until they touch the stone again. The effects of our actions come back to us, and as long as our actions are done with evil intent, the waves of effect will come back to us as evil. But if we are kind and keep ourselves peaceful, the returning waves of trouble will grow weaker until they die down and our good kamma will come back to us in blessing.

In the world around us there are many inequalities in the lot of man — some are rich, others are

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poor, some live full lives, others die young, etc. According to Buddhism, the inequalities which exist are due, to some extent, to environment — which is itself shaped by cause and effect — and to a greater extent to causes, that is kamma, which are in the present, the immediate past, and the remote past. Man himself is responsible for his own happiness and misery. Thus kamma is not fate nor destiny nor blind determinism. Man has a certain amount of free will; he can modify his actions and affect his future. Each act, whether mental or physical, tends to produce its like. If a man does a good deed or thinks a good thought, the effect upon him is to increase the tendencies to goodness in him.

The understanding of kamma gives us power. The more we make the doctrine of kamma a part of our lives, the more power we gain, not only to direct our future, but also to help our fellow beings more effectively. The practice of good kamma, when fully developed, will enable us to overcome evil and even to overcome kamma itself, thus bringing us to our goal, Nirvana.

The principle of dependent origination and the law of kamma provide the background for understanding the nature of rebirth. According to Buddhism, death is "the temporary end of a temporary phenomenon." It is not the complete annihilation of the being, for although the organic life has ceased, the kammic force which hitherto actuated it is not destroyed. Our physical forms are only the outward manifestations of the invisible kammic force. When the present form perishes, another form takes its place according to a good or bad volitional impulse — the kamma that was the most powerful — at the moment before death.

At death the kammic force remains entirely undisturbed by the disintegration of the physical body, and the passing away of the present consciousness creates the conditions for the coming into being of a fresh body in another birth. The stream of consciousness flows on like a river which is built up by its tributaries and dispenses its water to the countryside through which it passes. The continuity of flux at death is unbroken in point of time; there is no breach in the stream of consciousness, and therefore there is no room whatever for an intermediate stage between this life and the next. Rebirth takes place immediately.

The present being, present existence, is conditioned by the way one faced circumstances in the last and in all past existences. One's present character and circumstances are the result of all that one has been up to the present, but what one will be in the future depends on what one does now in the present. The true Buddhist regards death as a momentary incident between one life and its successor and views its approach with calmness. His only concern is that his future should be such that the condition of that life may provide him with better opportunities for perfecting himself.

Buddhism teaches that with the practice of meditation and concentration the memory can be trained. By meditation and mind culture one can acquire the power to see one's rebirth as a link, or a succession of links, in a chain of births; one can also acquire the power of looking back into one's previous lives. Not only this, but Buddhism also teaches that with the attainment of Nirvana in this life itself, through enlightenment and true wisdom, one can reach the end of this chain of rebirths.

Nirvana, the state to which all Buddhists aspire, is the cessation of desire and hence the end of suffering. Nirvana in Sanskrit means "the blowing out." It is understood as the extinguishment of the flame of personal desire, the quenching of the fire of life. Among Westerners Nirvana is often thought of as a negative state, a kind of "nothingness." But in the Buddhist scriptures it is always described in positive terms; the highest refuge, safety, emancipation, peace, and the like. Nirvana is freedom, but not freedom from circumstance; it is freedom from the bonds with which we have bound ourselves to circumstance. That man is free who is strong enough to say, "Whatever comes I accept as best."

Nirvana is the dying of the kammic force. The Buddhist ascends to Nirvana through many stages of the Middle Way, the path of wisdom, morality, and control. There is not space enough here even to mention these phases or the various aspects of the regimen recommended by the Buddha in his vast scriptures; but it may be taken for granted that the life of the conscientious Buddhist is full and rich. Through the cycle of rebirths he ascends, he perfects himself, he conquers his cravings through wisdom and love. Slowly the kammic force ebbs away, the flame dies down.

At the root of man's trouble is his primal state of ignorance. From ignorance comes desire, which sets the kammic force in motion. Hence the way to Nirvana lies through knowledge, and we come again full circle to Dhamma, the Buddha's teachings. For in Dhamma, as truth, lies release from ignorance and desire and perpetual change, and the Buddha has shown us the way to truth.

3

WHAT, then, is the meaning of Buddhism? Ultimately Buddhism, although not strictly speaking a religion, is a systematic exercise in spirituality, certainly one of the greatest ever conceived. It offers the individual a means by which he may fulfill himself through understanding, reaching eventually the plane of the supraperson on which both the self and self-knowledge are no longer useful. Meister Eckhart, the great Christian mystic, said: "The kingdom of God is for none but the thoroughly dead." The Buddhist would agree, though he would probably prefer a less grim way of saying it. Nirvana in

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life, the peace which "passeth all understanding," is the conquest of life, the discovery of the permanent in its flux of psychophysical accidents and circumstances. The Buddhist believes that through meditation and good hard thought he can follow the Buddha through the successive stages of enlightenment and achieve at last the perfect wisdom which surmounts all need.

But by no means all Buddhists are monks or adepts. What does Buddhism mean for the ordinary person going about his work in the world? All through the Buddha's teaching, repeated stress is laid on self-reliance and resolution. Buddhism makes man stand on his own feet, it arouses his self-confidence and energy. The Buddha again and again reminded his followers that there is no one, either in heaven or on earth, who can help them or free them from the results of their past evil deeds. The Buddhist knows that the powers of his own mind and spirit are enough to guide him in the present and shape his future and bring him eventually to the truth. He knows that he possesses a strength which is ultimately unsurpassable.

Moreover, Buddhism points unequivocally to the moral aspect of everyday life. Though Nirvana is amoral, in the sense that final peace transcends the conflict of good and evil, the path to wisdom is definitely a moral path. This follows logically from the doctrine of kamma. Every action must produce an effect, and one's own actions produce an effect in one's own life. Thus the kammic force which carries us inevitably onward can only be a force for good, that is, for our ultimate wisdom, if each action is a good action.

This doctrine finds its highest expression in *metta*, the Buddhist goal of universal and all-embracing love. *Metta* means much more than brotherly feeling or kindheartedness, though these are part of it. It is active benevolence, a love which is expressed and fulfilled in active ministry for the uplifting of fellow beings. *Metta* goes hand in hand with helpfulness and a willingness to forego self-interest in order to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind. It is *metta* which in Buddhism is the basis for social progress. *Metta* is, finally, the broadest and intensest conceivable degree of sympathy, expressed in the throes of suffering and change. The true Buddhist does his best to exercise *metta* toward every living being and identifies himself with all, making no distinctions whatsoever with regard to caste, color, class, or sex.

In addition, of course, the teachings of the Buddha are a prime cultural force in Oriental life, just as the Bible is the ultimate source of much Western art and thought. The Buddhist scriptures are larger and more detailed than the Christian Bible, however, and in translation would fill a dozen volumes. In Pali, the language of the scriptures, the Buddha's teachings are called *Tripitaka*, which means "The Three Baskets."

Vinaya Pitaka, "The Basket of Discipline," consists of five books which expound the rules of monastic life. *Sutta Pitaka*, "The Basket of Discourses," is a collection of discussions, stories, poems, and proverbs, written in simple language, imparting all the precepts of practical Buddhism. The third basket, *Abhidhamma Pitaka*, or "Basket of Ultimate Things," deals with epistemological, metaphysical, and psychological matters and is of interest mainly to trained philosophers.

Thus the *Tripitaka* offers cohesive guidance at every level of intellectual, ethical, and spiritual activity. The Buddha's word is light, a lamp for Burma — and for everyone.

FOLK-ELEMENTS IN BURMESE BUDDHISM

by Maung Htin Aung

When the great King Anawrahta of Pagan united the whole of Burma into a single kingdom in the eleventh century and made Theravada Buddhism the national religion, there were already in existence a number of primitive religious cults, the most important and the most popular of which were the worship of "Nat" spirits, astrology, and alchemy. In addition, there were also Mahayana Buddhism and Tantric (or magical) Buddhism, but debased and distorted, and bearing strange fruit from the fertile soil of native cults of magic and sorcery. All the different cults were given an artificial unity by the fact that they were all under the patronage of the Ari monks. These Ari monks had some acquaintance with the Buddhist scriptures, gloried in the name of the Buddha, and wore dark brown robes and conical hats. But they also presided over the Nat spirit festivals, at which hundreds of animals were sacrificed.

Astrology to the Burmese meant not only the methods of tracing the courses of the planets and their influence on mortals, but also the ritual by which the planets were appeased and made to withdraw their baneful influence. In other words, it involved a worship of the planets. As Burmese astrology had its origins in Hindu astrology, the worship of the planets also involved worship of at least some of the Hindu gods.

Alchemy also came to Burma from India, but Burmese alchemy became a religious cult. The Burmese alchemist did not merely seek the power to transmute base metals into gold, but had the noble aim of evolving an eternally youthful body, which would be an answer to the perpetual human lament that beauty and youth must pass.

The worship of Nats was purely native in origin, and developed out of that form of animism which

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still prevails among some of the hill peoples of the country. The term "Nat" originally meant a "lord," and involved an idea similar to feudal overlordship. A Nat was a spirit who had some dominion over a group of people or over a certain object or objects. The spirit who had dominion over a small withered tree was as much a Nat as the spirit who had dominion over a particular village or district. The suzerainty of a Nat was both territorial and personal. The Nat guardian of a village had power over all those who were born in the village or born of a village family, wherever they might be, and he also had power over all who came to his village, during the time they remained there. He would inflict no harm, nay, he would even give his protection, to those who recognized his suzerainty, and such recognition could be expressed by an offering of rice or fruit, or by a few words of supplication, or a gesture of homage.

At first the Nats that were worshiped were impersonal and local, as for example, the Nats of the banyan tree, the hill, and the lake which were just outside the village, and the guardian Nat of the village. Later on, thirty-six personal and national Nats came into being, who were distinct personages with their own life histories, and who were worshiped all over the country. They did not replace the local Nats, but diminished their importance.

The most important of the thirty-six were the Lord of the Great Mountain, and his sister Lady Golden-Face, whose abode was on Mount Popa, an extinct volcano in central Burma. They became, in the ninth century, the guardian gods of the city of Pagan and its kings. There was an annual Nat feast on Mount Popa itself, at which hundreds of animals were offered as sacrifice to the Lord of the Great Mountain and Lady Golden-Face. People came from afar to take part in the feast, to get drunk with ecstasy and toddy wine, and to dance with abandon, believing themselves to have become possessed by the Nats. There were spirit mediums in attendance at the Nat shrines, who provided the wild music and led the wilder dances. The Popa feast was held on a full moon day in December, and on other full moon days there were also feasts connected with other pre-Buddhist cults.

When Anawrahta made Theravada Buddhism the national religion of the country, opposition came naturally from the Aris, and because they exercised great influence over the people, the king had no choice but to resort to religious persecution. The Ari monks were unfrocked, and made to serve in the royal armies. All the images of the gods of the planets and the Hindu gods were seized and placed in a Vishnu temple, which was renamed "The Prison of the Gods." All the pre-Buddhist cults were suppressed. Spirit mediums left the shrines to become strolling musicians, dancers, and actors.

But the people found it difficult to discard at once old beliefs and old practices, and resorted to stratagem. The followers of the cult of alchemy modified their conception of an eternally youthful body to that of a body remaining youthful for thousands of years, in order to conform to the Buddhist doctrine that nothing is permanent, and justified their search for the elixir of youth by saying that they wanted to live until the coming of the next Buddha so that they could listen to his preaching. The followers of the cult of astrology threw a veneer of Buddhism over their ritual and ceremony, as for example in the case of the ceremony of the Nine Gods, where the gods of the nine planets gave way to Buddha and his eight disciples.

As for Nat worship, the people, in spite of the king's edicts, went on worshiping the Nats, and Anawrahta finally decided to bring them over into Buddhism. The figures of the thirty-six lords were taken from their shrines, and placed in the king's great pagoda, in an attitude of worship, and he declared that the number was now thirty-seven, because Sakra, the king of the gods and guardian of Buddhism, was at the head of the pantheon. The cult of Thirty-Six Lords therefore became the cult of the Thirty-Seven Lords, and Anawrahta replaced some of the earlier lords with the Nat spirits of some of his dead heroes.

All this was possible, because the Burmese concept of the Nat was a very comprehensive one and took in under its wing Hindu gods as well as Buddhist figures. As the Nats themselves were now shown to be worshipers of the Buddha, it was deemed proper for Buddhists to worship the Nats. The feasts of the full moon became festivals of the full moon on being given a coating of Buddhism, just as pre-Christian feasts of spring and midwinter in Europe became the great Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas.

With the passing of time, people came to forget the pre-Buddhist and primitive origins of their folk beliefs in alchemy, astrology, and Nats, and learned to accept them as part of their Buddhism, just as they thought that the pre-Buddhist belief in the transmigration of souls was a doctrine of Theravada Buddhism. Thus, at the present day, many (and in rural and primitive areas the majority) of Burmese still consult their astrologer and make their offerings to the Nats, without ceasing to be good Buddhists. At certain times of year dances are still held through which the dancers try to become possessed by the Nat spirits, and a few Burmese still even make alchemic experiments.

But such beliefs and practices cannot overwhelm Buddhism in any way, for they have been shorn of their primitive meaning and philosophy. The Burmese who resort to astrology, alchemy, or Nat worship, do so for safety and success in their mundane life, and the same Burmese will observe the Buddhist religious days and perform deeds of merit in preparation for the countless existences that they must undergo in the whirlpool of rebirth.

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THE PRINCE OF THE PRISON

A Story

by "DAGON SHWE HMYAR"

1

JUST two years before I served a term of imprisonment — for the third time — at the Central Jail, more by fate's design than accident I became acquainted, as this narrative will unfold, with a young maid of the Shan State.

On that fateful day, at twilight, when the golden sun had just hidden its face behind the mountains to the west of the river, I was occupied in trimming the plants in my betel-leaf garden. Looking up from my work, I saw a fair and comely maid of about twenty summers or so hurrying toward me. She carried a leather bag, the weight of which had obviously almost exhausted her. Panting, she cried, "Uncle! Uncle! Please permit me to hide in your garden for just a few minutes!"

"But what ails you, Niece, and why —"

Before I could complete my sentence she continued, imploringly, with a tinge of despair in her voice, "Please, please . . . allow me to explain later . . . where may I hide?"

Although to harbor one who, as I was convinced, was evading arrest is criminal according to law, I deemed it incumbent that I, a full-grown man, should help the weaker sex in distress. Quickly I led the girl through my hut to a not too deep blind well behind my compound. Just in time! I was barely back in my hut when a subinspector of police and a constable, both on cycles, drew up and inquired whether I had not seen a girl with a leather suitcase pass by. I gave them a negative answer, which did not even go down *cum grano salis* for they proceeded to search my hut and compound for some considerable time. But, in the gathering darkness, they did not detect the well and, giving me a suspicious look, they withdrew.

After waiting half an hour, lest the police return, I helped the trembling girl out of the well and led her back to my hut. I then served her with the meal I had prepared for myself, while I inquired the cause of her flight from the clutches of the law. She told me that her name was Ma Nan Nyunt. A few months earlier she had for some pressing reason left her native haunts in the Shan State to take shelter in the Kemmendine ward of Rangoon. There she met a wealthy Chinese merchant. This man showed her great kindness, inviting her to live in his home and conferring upon her all the rights and privileges of a daughter. Her foster father, though to all appearances and general acceptance a man of standing and influence in social circles, was in truth the head of an opium-smuggling gang. To her sorrow she gradually learned that he was also a forger of currency, mastermind of a group that sneaked gold into the country, director of a pack of pickpockets, a dealer in stolen goods — in fact he had a finger in every type of shady deal and malpractice. Playing upon her gratitude, this crafty paragon of vice slowly but surely assigned to her certain duties which automatically drew her into his gang of criminals. As the days passed, the tasks entrusted to her became of a more and more confidential and serious nature, immersing her deeper into the underworld.

On two occasions she had made a bold bid for freedom and normal life, but each time the business

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"DAGON SHWE HMYAR" *is the pen name of* U TIN, *a Burman, born in Prome in 1899. One of Burma's most popular and prolific writers, he specializes in crime, mystery, and adventure stories. In a long literary career, he has helped edit several magazines and is now Director of Cultural Activities for the Burma Translation Society. The style of the translation of his story reflects the tone of popular fiction in Burmese mass-audience media.*

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magnate had little difficulty in drawing her back. Wealth covers a multitude of sins and far and widespread is its dragnet. Strange to say, after this she was taken more into her master's confidence and private affairs, which not only demanded complete secrecy but called for such wit as could more than match that of any intelligence or counterintelligence group known. Escape being impossible, she resigned herself to her lot and served her captor so loyally and diligently that willy-nilly she was "raised" to the status of one of his concubines.

Having unfolded the major part of her story, Ma Nan Nyunt was profuse with her thanks for the little service I had rendered.

"There is no need to thank me so much," I replied. "I only did what becomes a normal man, offering shelter to one who stood in dire need."

Making a gesture of obeisance, as is the practice of people of good heritage and upbringing, she asked for permission to leave. I assented, and, thanking me once again, she left the hut and was enveloped by the night. On the following morning, as I was about to partake of a preparation of betel pickle, as is my habit after drinking plain tea, I took up the betel box and in the second layer saw two hundred-*kyat* notes. It was a pleasant surprise.

Time passed, but with no contact or news of the girl I had aided. Then, a few months later, for having been a bit too rustic-like in teaching an autocratic township officer good manners I was awarded eighteen months' rigorous imprisonment at the Central Jail, where my old comrades and satellites welcomed me warmly.

The Central Jail was then run by a European, Major Arbuthnot, the Superintendent, with Mr. Dawson, a Eurasian, as Chief Jailer and Mr. Jalan, an Indian Christian, as Deputy Jailer *cum* Physician. Major Arbuthnot occupied a government bungalow on the very summit of a hill not far from the jail, where, with a squad of prisoners, I was regularly detailed for duty.

One day, having learned from the Third Jailer, U Ba Ko, that a woman — a notorious opium smuggler sentenced to a year's "R.I." — would be keeping us company, I was on the watch for her arrival. At about 5:30 P.M. I saw the prison van, the "Black Maria," draw up to the prison enclosure. In it were three men and a woman carrying a baby. Though she had a shawl drawn over her head as she passed by where I was working, I caught a brief glimpse of her face. It seemed familiar, but I could not place her. She, on her part, started with surprise, as though she recognized me, but said nothing.

That night I tossed about, unable to get to sleep, trying to pin-point the girl whose face I had seen — known somewhere, some time in my life. Then like a flash it came to me: this was the very girl whom I had helped evade the clutches of the police — the girl who in sheer gratitude for my trivial service had left me two hundred *kyats*.

Making some inquiries next day, I learned that the charge against her was the smuggling of a *lakh's* worth of opium. It was said that she brought the drug down by boat from Upper Burma and was caught by the excise authorities when the steamer reached Rangoon.

The twenty-odd women prisoners, with only their two women warders to keep an eye on them and the occasional round of the jailers on duty, enjoyed a fair percentage of a kind of freedom and privacy. No male prisoner was allowed to be seen in their portion of the jail. However, fate contrived a means whereby in the face of all these restrictions, I again met Ma Nan Nyunt.

2

In jail I was permitted to read and practice the directions contained in the books *Nayathukhi* and *Nayamala*, the Burmese *Materia Medica*, and other tomes of the East on medical science, for which I had a bent. Times out of number prisoners afflicted with normal ailments successfully responded to my treatment. Few are aware, but it is true, that it is very difficult for a sick prisoner to obtain permission to undergo treatment in an outside hospital. Therefore I was in great demand among the prisoners, and as my usefulness increased with the number of successes so did the favors and privileges shown me by the authorities. I was even allowed to go outside the jail to collect herbs for my medications.

One day, while I was cleaning the office of the Deputy Jailer, the Chief Jailer's peon came in and told me that I was summoned by his boss. I followed immediately and, on reaching his room, *shikoed*, as was the practice, and then stood at attention. The Chief Jailer unfolded a piece of paper and said, with a smile: "Well, Maung Pho Thein, it seems you have become a great physician in this jail."

This sent the blood racing in my veins; what was in store for me, I wondered? The Chief continued, "Here is an application from the women's section of the jail. That woman who arrived some days ago in connection with an opium case is nursing an infant. The child is not well, and she wishes to consult you even before our physician. As attending to the sick is a charitable act, you have my permission." He paused for a moment, and then continued, "These women who come to the jail with infants not only bring trouble on themselves but also upon us. But what is to be done? A child must bear the sins of its mother."

I nodded in assent. "As you have commanded, *Thakin*," I replied and bowed out of his room.

Putting a few phials into my bag, I proceeded to the women's section, accompanied by the Third Jailer's peon, Najut Singh. We were met at the door by Ma Khin Sein, the Wardress, who led me in.

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A portion of the huge barred walling of the jail had been screened with blankets, converting it into a little room, and there I found Ma Nan Nyunt with the baby in her arms patiently awaiting our arrival.

Najut Singh had halted at the door and even the Wardress stood at a respectable distance. I seated myself on a stool and Ma Nan Nyunt presented the infant for my inspection. It was a boy. It had a high fever and symptoms which indicated influenza. I gave the mother a pulverized compound of herbs, to be administered with her milk, and some medicine for external application.

Breaking the silence, Ma Nan Nyunt asked, "Do you remember me, Uncle?"

"Yes, but why did you leave two hundred *kyats* in my betel box?"

"That is but a small return. Please do not talk about it. By the way, for my child — is there any cause for anxiety?"

"None at all. Only carry out my instructions."

"Thank you very much, Uncle."

I turned to go, but she halted me and whispered, "Uncle, there are things I want to consult with you about."

I glanced at the Wardress apprehensively.

"Do not worry," she went on. "They have been 'fed,' and will be both deaf and dumb."

"Very well, Niece," said I.

"Please, Uncle, promise that whenever it is necessary that I should see you you will come."

"I shall do my best," I replied.

"My friends here," she continued, "have told me all about your powers and privileges. I am counting on you, depending very greatly on you, as no woman has ever depended on any man."

Ah, the strange workings of fate!

3

Weeks passed, and I had almost forgotten Ma Nan Nyunt, when I was sent for again. This time, on examining the child, I observed that it had fever but no accompanying symptoms. While I was striving to get to the root of such a peculiarity, Ma Nan Nyunt smiled, and whispered, "Nothing is actually wrong with him, Uncle. I have brought about the high temperature. I put an onion under his armpit and kept him in the sun for quite a while. I did this because I wanted to consult you on a very important matter."

I turned round to look at the warders. Reading my thoughts, she said that I had nothing to fear from them as they had all been "squared up," and were remaining at a distance to enable us to talk.

"If that is so, go ahead. What is it that you wish to consult me about?"

"First, let me ask you," she said, with a smile, "how have you sized me up?"

"Well, Ma Nyunt," I said, "I do not know why, whether due to a misunderstanding with your parents, or on a secret mission, you forsook your native place for Rangoon; but once there, I think that fate threw you into the clutches of a man of evil means, resulting in your being jailed."

"Correct, Uncle. Every surmise of yours has hit the nail on the head. My mother was the second mahadevi of a sawbwa. The Lord of the Sunset loved and cherished my mother and the affection he showered on me even far exceeded his love for his sons. Thus I grew in the warmth of his concern and protection. Then, with one cruel stroke, fate deprived me of my mother who suddenly took ill and died. Well, as the saying goes, it does not rain but it pours. Shortly after my mother's death an officer of my father's bodyguard suddenly developed a soft spot for me, and it seemed that my father was inclined to approve. Determined not to be the chattel of a man nearing the half-century mark, I hid most of the precious gems which Mother had bequeathed me, sold my gold and other valuable ornaments, and headed for Rangoon. What happened to me, how I fell into the clutches of a wealthy Chinese resulting in my imprisonment here, must now be clear to you. Part of it I told you when I first met you in your hut."

"Yes, that is all quite clear. Now, how do you require my assistance?"

Holding up the baby, she said, "Here, this little infant — I want him out of this jail and back in the care and protection of his grandfather. As for me, having been deprived of the essence of life — I shall never have genuine love and a happy home — it matters little how my journey ends. Nor do I care now to mend my ways. Please, Uncle, by any means you can contrive, get this little mite out of this jail and back under the wing of his grandfather. As for the Chinese, his father, some evidence must be produced that his child — who was conceived by a mere process of nature — died in this jail."

While I was giving an attentive ear to all that Ma Nan Nyunt said, I kept up a pretense of feeling the pulse of the child and rubbing his little chest with salve. Then I asked: "Even if I can manage to get this child out of these prison walls how, in the name of the powers you hold sacred, can I send him to his grandfather in the Shan State?"

"There is a man in the city — one U Yan We of Ahlone — who was once in my father's employ. If the child is entrusted to his hands, the task will be as good as done."

"But then, what about evidence to show that the baby died here in jail?"

"That you will have to contrive, as I am only a stupid woman. But you must find a way. I do not want my flesh and blood to grow up in jail, and then, when out of it, to wallow in that depraved underground world of his father. Oh, Uncle, let me alone be saturated with evil! Let not my son share my lot! The grandson of the Lord of the Sunset must grow up in the Shan State as befits a Shan."

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"Your plan is great and admirable, Niece, but not easy to execute."

"That is true, Uncle, and for that very reason I have sought your assistance. Do not be baffled. In this world there are only a few things which money cannot achieve."

She then drew out a little bundle which she had hidden in her bosom, and handing it over to me quickly, said: "Here, take these three precious gems which I have always hidden in my breast. Do what you will with them . . . only take the child to U Yan We. He is trustworthy and capable of taking my son to his grandfather."

When I was back once again in my cell, I opened the little packet and discovered two large, shining diamonds of the first quality. In luster and size they were identical. I had never set eyes on diamonds of such brilliancy and likeness. And the third stone was a blood-red, flawless ruby. The diamonds, at prewar value, would have fetched at least five thousand *kyats* each. The ruby was above valuation. Putting the precious stones safely away, I sat up practically the whole night trying to work out a scheme for the task that had been set me.

Next morning, as I went to carry out my routine duty at the office of the Deputy Jailer, I passed the Chief Jailer's house where his little daughter, called "Baby," was playing with a toy dog made of wax. This toy was a gift I had purchased for the child myself from a Chinese one day when I was allowed out to collect herbs. The Chief Jailer had been pleased and whenever he asked the baby, "Who bought you the puppy?" she would point her little forefinger at me. Then, like a flash, the plan which I had been racking my brains for struck me full and square in the face.

4

The following week I was again detailed on duty with a squad of prisoners to work at the Jail Superintendent's house. The warders who accompanied us were Najut Singh, who was very intimate with me, and another Indian. When we were about to pass the house of the Chinese sculptor Ah Foung, I told Najut Singh that I wanted to have a few words with my Chinese friend. Directing the other warder to proceed slowly with the men, he stood by the front gate while I went into Ah Foung's house. Luckily he was at home. Quickly I explained to him my need and assured him that I was in a position to pay well for his aid. I also arranged with him to search out the man U Yan We and bring him to his house at the same time next week.

As Najut Singh and I followed up the squad that had been sent ahead, I realized that it was necessary to put the warder "wise," to some extent at least, to my plan, and also to "feed" him adequately in order that the complicated scheme might go off smoothly without a hitch.

The next week, I touched in again at Ah Foung's place and was relieved to discover that he had indeed managed to find and bring U Yan We. I needed only to mention to this worthy man a few things about Ma Nan Nyunt and in a short space we became thick friends. Though over fifty years of age, U Yan We was well built, full, and firm. He had a frank, cordial air, and honesty was written all over him. I lost no time in handing over the three precious stones with the request that they be sold in the shortest time possible. I told him of Ma Nan Nyunt's ardent wish and what she asked him to do.

He took the gems from me and, holding them against the sun, said in a husky voice, "So the hand of destiny has forced the girl to part with her family jewels." He paused for a bit and then continued, "Only the sufferer can fully appreciate the extent of his stomach-ache. Yes, U Pho Thein, I shall have them disposed of within a week."

The following week I met U Yan We again. Handing me ten thousand *kyats*, he said, "This is not even half of what the stones should fetch, but when one is in need, and also in a hurry, a very wide margin has to be allowed."

Calculating the "palm grease" that was now in my hand, I decided to use it in the following proportions: three thousand to Mr. Jalan; two thousand to U Yan We; one thousand for myself to defray expenses in working the scheme; three hundred to Najut Singh; five hundred to the Wardress; one hundred to Ah Foung for the wax baby; and the balance into the hands of U Yan We to hold for Ma Nan Nyunt when she would be released.

A fortnight later I began to put my plan into motion. At first, Mr. Jalan, the Deputy Jailer and physician, expressed great reluctance to being made a partner in such a scheme, but the feel of crisp currency notes to the tune of three thousand *kyats* soon awakened his sympathies.

Nature abetted our plan. The hot season had set in, and because of the intense heat and sudden change of weather, smallpox broke out in the neighboring quarters of the city. Following my instructions and using the old onion method, Ma Nan Nyunt caused the child to develop a high fever. At the same time, she kept him outside the curtain for an hour or so, where he was at the mercy of the mosquitoes. This brought about red pimply eruptions all over his body. Detailed by the Chief Jailer to take care of the child's illness, I submitted that it was not afflicted this time with an ailment common to children but with smallpox, which called for segregation. On this grave report, Mr. Jalan was, of course, called in to examine the baby. But he had been so well "greased" that he not only transferred Ma Nan Nyunt and her child to a distant room all to themselves, but also insisted, as a protective measure, that the whole jail staff and even all the prisoners should be vaccinated.

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The next day Mr. Jalan announced that the child's condition was critical and it must be carried to his house for administration of oxygen. The whole jail was by now in mortal terror of contracting smallpox and the prisoners expressed their reluctance, in no uncertain manner, to carrying the infected child. It was here, to the pleasure and relief of all, that I volunteered. On arrival at his house, Mr. Jalan took us into his room where I unwrapped the baby, who had returned to normal and, with a smile on his face, was playing with his tiny fist. Looking at the child, I marveled at the heart and ambition of his mother, and the peculiar part they were forcing me to play.

There was no time for daydreaming. I turned the child over to U Yan We, who was there ahead of us, according to plan. I then dressed the wax dummy, which was exceedingly lifelike, in its clothes. I even took care to take the real baby's amulet and tie it onto the wax imitation.

The exchange completed, I hastened back to the jail, swathing my burden in the blanket so that the deception could not be detected. When the Chief Jailer saw me returning, he wrinkled up his nose and signaled to me to hurry. All the prisoners, male and female, took good care to keep at a respectable distance from me. Even Najut Singh and the Wardress, who had been drawn in as accomplices by the lure of gold, made a pretense of fighting shy of me. Thus I was able to hand over the wax baby to Ma Nan Nyunt and reassure her anxiety with the news that her child was safe in the hands of U Yan We. Before I left, I whispered a few important instructions into her ear.

When I returned to the office, the Chief Jailer asked me whether the child was better. I gave him a negative answer and added that, personally, I nursed no hopes for its recovery. He seemed surprised, and asked, "How is it that when I looked at the child the other day, I did not notice any smallpox eruptions?"

"Yes, *Thakin*, that is the very reason why there is no hope. According to the *Materia Medica*, the eruptions must show up *ad lib.*, or the case is fatal. The doctor must cause these eruptions to show up with his medicines. If the child is breast-fed, the mother must be treated."

"Did not Jalan treat the child to produce that effect?"

"I think he did. He took the child into his room for about an hour. The doctor knows best, *Thakin*."

"Yes, we must now pray to God to spare the rest of us. I personally loathe and fear this disease. Well, well, you may go about your work."

Next morning, at about 5 A.M., a woman's piercing cry rent the air. It was Ma Nan Nyunt. She was shouting and wailing, "Baby, you have left me, your poor mother, to face the sordid world alone," and other similar woeful phrases.

Mr. Jalan was summoned, as was I, and, with several warders we proceeded to the women's section. All remained behind while the doctor and myself went behind the curtains where Ma Nan Nyunt was. On seeing us, she redoubled her wailing, calling upon the doctor to restore life to her child. So convincing was her grief that I was fully persuaded of the truth of what has been written by the sages about the wiles of women. To render a fair account of Eve's caprices, art, and craft would need volumes. Mr. Jalan only lifted a little corner of the wrapper which covered the body and after the briefest of glances turned his face away. Then after making out the death certificate, he left.

Being an elder among the prisoners and acquainted with the jail regulations, the task of bringing about the burial fell on me. It was the work of only a few moments for a prisoner-carpenter to make a tiny coffin. The corpse was sprinkled with disinfectant, then wrapped in cloth and packed around with charcoal dust.

By nine o'clock all was ready. Taking up the little coffin in my arms, I proceeded toward the cemetery in the jail yard, led by another prisoner who struck the brass cymbal according to custom, and followed by the bereaved mother, whose lamentations continued unabated, and a few of the other women prisoners as mourners. A shallow pit had already been dug, and the coffin was lowered into it and covered as I recited the five precepts and a few other brief last rites.

A few months later, when the time of my release was at hand, I secured permission to wish good-by to Ma Nan Nyunt. She told me, her eyes brimming with happy tears, that she had received word that the child was well and safe with her father, the Lord of the Sunset. She insisted that a thousand *kyats* to defray my expenses in the undertaking was far too little, and that I must take at least another thousand from the sum set aside for her. I thanked her from the very depths of my heart, but assured her that I could not accept a *pya* more. Though what I had done was criminal according to law, I deemed that service which allays the mental or physical anguish of a neighbor and does not bring about any loss or damage to another is no crime — especially when it does not interfere with or impede the administrative functions of the country.

One month after my release from jail I gave vent to my gypsy spirit, sold my little garden, and left for Upper Burma. I have not since obtained any news of Ma Nan Nyunt, whose child, as the authorities can certify and have recorded, died in jail. Yet, as I write this story, I can see vividly in my mind's eye the wax image I buried in the cemetery in the Central Jail and also that chubby little child — the "Prince of the Prison" — in the loving and competent care and protection of his grandfather.

Translated by H. Conar

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MODERN BURMESE LITERATURE

Its Background in the Independence Movement

by U ON PE

1

WE FIND the earliest examples of literature in the Burmese language in hundreds of inscriptions carved on stone which still survive from the kingdom of Pagan dating back to the eleventh century. Next we have books written on dried palm leaves, such as the *Maniratanapum*, a fifteenth-century collection of ancient traditions, or Bhikkhu Ratthasara's *Hatthipala Pyo*, a long poem based on *Jataka* stories of the lives of the Buddha.

Nawadegyi and Natshinnaung were our great poets of the Toungoo dynasties, and the pandit Binnyadala has left us an exciting prose chronicle of the long struggle between the Burmese King of Ava and the Mon King of Pegu. Much of our history comes down to us from the *Egyins*, historical ballads that were sung at the cradle ceremony of a new-born prince or princess. Dramatic literature flourished at the courts of Ava and Shwebo, in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, with the themes for poetic plays drawn first from the *Jatakas* and later, through contact with Siam, from Hindu sources such as the *Ramayana*.

U ON PE, *a Burman, was born in 1913 at Syriam, just across the Irrawaddy from Rangoon. After graduation from the University of Rangoon he taught in its English Department, then became a translator and researcher for the British administration. Once the Rangoon representative of the Associated Press, he is now a publisher of schoolbooks, with fiction writing an important sideline, which won him the Sape Beikman Prize in 1950.* U WUN, *born in 1909 in a district near Rangoon of Burman-Mon-Shan ancestry, was educated at the University of Rangoon and at Oxford. A philologist who has worked with Old Burmese, Mon, Pyu, Pali, Tibetan, and Sanskrit, he is now head of Rangoon University's Department of Translation and Publication, and directs the new Burmese Dictionary Project. U Wun is also one of Burma's most distinguished poets.*

Our last dynasty had its court at Mandalay (1857–1885) and here were gathered poets, dramatists, and writers of chronicle. Their works were inscribed on heavy paper folios, folded in pleats, called *parabaiks*, and often were very beautifully illustrated in vivid color. (See *Training Elephants*, Plate 38 in the art section.) With the British annexation of Burma in 1885 came new forces which were completely to change the patterns of Burmese writing: the printing press and the influence of Western education and literature. Our classical dramas in court style gave way to plays for a less refined audience, and these, in turn, to popular novels based on Western models.

Thus the first Burmese novel, published in 1904, was a skillful resetting, with Burmese characters in a Burmese scene, of Dumas' *Count of Monte Cristo*, so well done that our grandmothers used to speak with real affection of the ill-fated raft-man Maung Yin Maung and his perilous adventures. There followed a spate of similar novels which were written obviously for entertainment. Sherlock Holmes appeared among us, in *gaungbaung* and *pasoe*, as the Burmese detective Maung San Sha, and the Burmese *East Lynne* was called *Ratanabon*.

To understand what happened to Burmese writing in the first decades of this century — the apparent total abandonment of our old literary traditions in favor of imitation of sometimes rather mediocre Western authors — we must remember that our most promising young men became civil servants for the British, and, though for the most part they retained their Buddhist religion, looked to England for their culture and entertainment as much as for their livelihood. It was only in the 1920's, when agitation for independence led to a national awakening, that Burmese classical literature

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came into the curricula of the schools and Rangoon University, and serious writing in Burmese was supported by the cultural leaders of the country.

During this dark period for Burmese writing the outstanding figure among those who resisted the trend to English was the novelist U Lat, whose *Shwe-pyi-soe* and *Sa-be-bin* were first published about fifty years ago. Today U Lat's books seem effusive and disorganized, more like anthologies of descriptive passages mixed with narrative than novels, but he did have vitality of a kind and he did focus his attention on a real Burma and the radically changing conditions of a transition period. The clash of cultures was U Lat's major theme. His caricature of an "England-returned" student who would not sit on a mat because of his trousers nor let his father enter the room where he and his wife were dining, is a little classic.

Most of U Lat's contemporaries in the novel were little better than hacks, who occasionally attempted realism but more often turned out "penny-dreadfuls." However, Ledipandita U Maung Gyi, the editor of *Dagon*, a Burmese monthly now defunct, produced some multi-volume accounts of the last days of the Burmese aristocracy which, though long-winded and loosely written, are not unentertaining. And *Nay-yi-yi*, by P. Monin, is still remembered, among the realistic novels of the period, as a work of considerable merit.

Soon after the First World War, political consciousness began to increase among the Burmese, particularly in student circles. The Young Men's and Young Women's Buddhist Associations, modeled on the YMCA and YWCA, became centers of the independence movement, and the rising tide of nationalism found expression in the work of a new generation of writers. It was customary for these new writers to take pseudonyms, both to conceal their identities from the authorities and, by using several pen names, to make the number of those in the movement seem larger. Today, these pseudonyms are still maintained — a badge of honor, as it were — and many younger writers have taken up the fashion.

One of the leading champions of Burmese nationalism, the poet U Lun, wrote under the names of "Mr. Maung Hmaing" (to ridicule the anglicized Burmans who prefixed their names with a "Mr.") and "Thakin Kodaw Hmaing." ("Thakin," or "master," is the Burmese equivalent to "sahib" in India, and was the prefix adopted by many of our Resistance leaders who formed their own Thakin party to drive out the British masters.) U Lun took an old Burmese poetic form, the *laygyogyi*, and developed it to serve his modern need. Though a poet to the core, he did not hesitate to put his whole art at the service of the fight for freedom. His odes extolled the glories of Burma's great past and exhorted his countrymen to throw off the foreign yoke. The varying moods of U Lun's poetry are

THE BURMESE LANGUAGE

by U Wun

The *Burmese language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman group of the Tibeto-Chinese family of languages, but, unlike Chinese, it is not ideographic. That is, it does not have characters which originated as pictures, but an alphabet, of eleven vowels and thirty-two consonants, derived from the Pahlavi script of South India. "Our language comes from North and South" would look like this in Burmese type:*

ကျွန်တော်တို့၏စကားသည် မြောက်ဖက်နှင့်
တောင်ဘက်တို့မှ လာသည်။

By this I mean that our actual words, and the way we put them together, came to us from the North, with the early migrations from China, while the way we write them came from the South, brought to Burma by Indian traders and missionaries at a slightly later period. So far as we know, Burmese was first reduced to writing in the eleventh century at Pagan. Many inscriptions on stone still survive there.

Burmese, as is true of many Oriental languages, is monosyllabic; generally speaking, each word has only one syllable. Nouns, adjectives, and verb tenses are formed by the addition of suffixes to the verbal roots — a process of agglutination, as the philologists call it. To express anything but the very simplest things we must combine words of different meanings. In English, for example, you have separate root-terms for "sheep," "ewe," "lamb," and "mutton." To render these distinctions a Burmese will say: "sheep" (tho), *"female sheep"* (tho-ma), *"young sheep"* (tho-galay), *and "meat of sheep"* (tho-tha).

Like Chinese, Burmese is tonal. Being monosyllabic, it has a shortage of basic root-words since the consonants can only be combined in a limited number of ways. So each combination must do heavy duty, the differences in meaning being indicated by the speaker's tone of voice. For this we use three tones: the abrupt, the level, and the falling tone. As an example, ka, *in the abrupt tone, means "to dance";* kā, *in the level tone, means "to shield"; while* kā:, *in the falling tone, means "to spread wide." Or, if I wanted to say, "I saw a tall horse," it would be* "Myīn: myin myīn thee."

These complications make our language difficult but also one of the most musical in the East; its subtleties of sound have greatly enriched our poetry.

Our grammar is very simple, but its word order is sometimes the reverse of English. We have many loan-words that came to us with the Sanskrit of Hinduism and the Pali of Buddhism, from Arab traders, or from contact with our neighbors, the Shans, Thais, Malays, Chinese, Manipuris, and Bengalis.

The language of old Pagan was simple and direct; that of succeeding periods of our literature became learned, rigid, and ornate. With the printing press and a mass reading public Burmese has again become more simple and colloquial. Our problem now is to give it the technical vocabulary needed to cope with the wide range of modern science. To this end, a new dictionary and an encyclopaedia are being prepared, and thousands of new words are being coined.

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those of a nation going through the painful, slow ordeal of rebirth. From month to month, he recorded the struggle and stirred us to further effort.

In the 1930's, there sprang up in the precincts of Rangoon University a literary movement called *Khitsan* ("experiment for a new age") which has left a deep impression on all subsequent Burmese writing. One foreign critic has compared the *Khitsan* renaissance to the Imagist movement in Anglo-American poetry, and, to be sure, there was in both schools the same emphasis on simplicity, directness, and purity of language. But the inspiration for the Burmese movement was indigenous: it was the concentrated limpid beauty of the lithic writings left by the pagoda-building people of Pagan. In these old inscriptions, collected and transliterated by scholars such as Duroiselle, Blagden, Luce and Pe Maung Tin, the *Khitsan* writers found a native style to emulate which left no room for the excess word.

The leaders of this movement, all graduates of Rangoon University, came to be known as the "triumvirate"; they were U Sein Tin, U Thein Han, and U Wun. All were deeply committed to the independence struggle, but their writing was less directly political than that of U Lun. They felt quite as keenly about literary as about political freedom, and in resisting literary conservatism they championed the freedom of the spirit.

In this, U Sein Tin was particularly successful. He had joined the Civil Service, and in essays, sketches and diaries which he signed "Theippan Maung Wa" he wrote of the incidents and people in various walks of life with whom he had come in contact as a district officer. U Sein Tin created a conversational style with short, simple sentences which shocked the orthodox but set a standard in Burmese writing that has found many followers.

It was typical of U Thein Han that he chose as his pen name the word "*Zawgyi*," which means a worker of wonders — an alchemist or magician. As Librarian of the University, Thein Han was deep in books and steeped in the history and customs of old Burma. As literary alchemist he transmuted the dusty records into poems and essays which made our past shine with a new brilliance — a romantic view, perhaps, but one which served to remind us that the strength of the struggle for freedom was inherent in our people.

The third founding member of the *Khitsan* group was U Wun, one of the finest scholars our University has produced. Writing as "Minthuwun," he has also become a leading poet; he well deserves the high tribute which Gordon Luce, the inspired interpreter of Burmese culture, has paid him:

> Minthuwun is a son of the Irrawaddy Delta, born almost within the sound of the sea. For all the alien influences around him, his language is Burmese pure and undefiled. His themes, too, are Burmese, Buddhist and even traditional. He is a scholar who has drunk deep of ancient Burma — of Pali, Pyu, Old Mon and Old Burmese. Yet few of his poems are burdened with scholarship. Long-winded rigamarole is utterly eschewed. With a few simple, artful touches the poet stamps his own image on the mind. He delights in homeliness, colloquiality, in village life and nursery ditties. Even out of sweetness comes forth strength, the strength of delicacy, of one who knows and trusts his feelings and dares show them, of one who looks into his heart and writes.

A number of the *Khitsan* writers, and particularly those who wrote stories, were also good translators. They affiliated themselves with a more formal organization, the Burma Education Extension Association, writing and translating for its bilingual magazine *The World of Books*. This little review had an influence out of all proportion to its very modest size and format; in its pages the seeds were sown for our modern literary renaissance.

Perhaps I should pause here to record the debt which so many of us Burmese writers owe to another great Englishman who, like Gordon Luce, has spent most of his life in Burma. J. S. Furnivall has written the definitive study of our political economy, and, because he has been able to understand us as few other Westerners have ever done, inspired many of our intellectuals with the self-confidence they needed to stand on their own feet and express themselves. Furnivall not only founded the Burma Education Extension Association, but has also been one of the moving spirits behind the *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, which, since 1910, has provided publication for the scholarly papers of our scientists and historians.

2

If Burma today has a socialist philosophy of government, it may well be because, in the 1930's, so many of our students read the books which came out to us from Victor Gollancz's Left Book Club in London. The ideas of Marx reached Burma not from Russia but by way of England, so that we think in terms of a social welfare democracy, not of a totalitarian dictatorship. One of these young intellectuals at the University of Rangoon, who was then known simply as Ko Nu (later to become Thakin Nu, the Resistance leader, and now Prime Minister U Nu of the Union of Burma), hit upon the idea of starting a Burmese book club along the lines of the Left Book Club. Thus the Nagani (Red Dragon) Book Club was born. It translated into Burmese the leftist books of John Strachey and others, and also encouraged our own writers to turn their attention to social problems and the struggle against colonialism.

Often the propaganda novels of this period were pretty poor stuff — labored and tedious concoctions about the deep misery of the poor and the exploited in a capitalist, colonial society — but a few of them had enough literary quality to be convincing. Two,

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in particular, are worth mention: *Tet Phongyi* by Thein Pe and *Mein-ma-ba-wa* by the popular woman novelist Khin Khin Lay.

Tet Phongyi ("The Modern Monk") is a vigorous indictment of some of our Buddhist monks who do not strictly observe the precepts to which they are bound by their holy order, the Sangha. In recent times many of them have become too secularized, meddling in politics, holding demonstrations and even engaging in criminal activities behind the protection of the saffron robe.

Daw Khin Khin Lay's *Mein-ma-ba-wa* ("The Life of a Woman") is a fine study of the lot of a peasant woman in the rural society which is proverbially poor. It has been compared to Pearl Buck's *Good Earth*, and not unfavorably. The condition of the countryside, the plight of the peasants, who only know how to work hard and then spend their earnings in giving charity, the human character of the all-enduring mother and her two sons, one an honest laboring swain, the other an incorrigible criminal — these are the chief, and memorable, features of the story.

In 1942 the war, which had at first seemed only a distant threat, struck Burma in full violence, wreaking frightful destruction. We were bombed and burned once as the Japanese forced the British to retreat, and then once more, a few years later, when the tide turned and the Anglo-American forces drove the Japanese out again. The lot of our writers in the war years, like that of all other Burmese, was a hard one. The Japanese, whom some had mistakenly welcomed as liberators of the Asian from colonialism, proved instead to be chiefly interested in draining our country of its wealth, which they did with a cruel disregard of human rights. The most important novel of this period is U Nu's *Yet-set Pabe Kwai* ("Man, the Wolf of Man"). U Nu has always maintained that he would far rather be a writer than a politician and as soon as he was released from detention after the British retreat he wrote this book, which deals with the experiences of a young Burman jailed through the machinations of unscrupulous bureaucrats.

Soon after Burma's liberation from Japanese rule, some of our writers began, quite naturally, to produce novels about the war. Outstanding among them was *Nga Ba* by Htin Fatt, a member of the *Khitsan* group noted for the lively style and incisive satire of his earlier stories. Nga Ba, the book's central character, is a farmer who reacts in a typically Burmese way to the sudden changes in his rural life under the Japanese. A true Burman, he is as steadfastly optimistic as he is easily excited.

Both the Burma Education Extension Association and the Nagani Book Club were suppressed by the Japanese, but their place has been taken by a new and far larger organization, the Burma Translation Society. Sponsored by Prime Minister U Nu, who takes a close personal interest in its work, the Society is now the biggest publisher in Burma, turning out textbooks, an educational monthly magazine, the Burmese Encyclopaedia, series devoted to popular knowledge and the sciences, and many other works.

To encourage good writing in Burmese, the BTS has established the Sape Beikman Prizes, which, like the Pulitzer Prizes, are awarded to meritorious works in different categories. The first novel to win an award, in 1949 — and it was chosen from among sixty-six entries — was "Min Aung's" *Mo Auk Mye Bin* ("The Earth Under the Sky"), a story of peasant life with such typical situations as the harsh landlord and the philandering son of a good father.

The next year my own (or should I say "Tet Toe's") novel *Min Hmu Dan* ("The Civil Servant") was honored with the prize. Going back to prewar days, I tried in this novel to give a true picture of the overbearing attitudes of certain British officials and of the corruption that was rampant in some parts of the Civil Service.

We Burmese are justly proud of our new and democratic army, the subject of a novel by "Tha Du" which next won the Sape Beikman award. An old-timer, Sagaing U Po Thin, was recognized in 1954 for a tale of ancient Burma, while the most recent prize went to a woman writer, "Ma Ma Lay." Her *Mon Ywe Mahu* ("Not That He Hates") revolves around an ill-fated young girl, brought up in the orthodox Burmese way, who marries an extremely Westernized man several years her senior.

3

Perhaps none of these prize books are masterpieces, but there is no question that the Burmese novel has come a long way in fifty years. We have moved from outright cribbings or poor imitations of Western romances to realistic and serious treatments of themes, human and social, which closely affect the average citizen. Our writers are also making progress in the short story. This form was unknown to our ancestors and our best efforts in it still fall far short of the subtlety and technical virtuosity which we find in Western writing, but an eager public gives good support to a number of popular magazines and the standard is slowly rising. One thing which we badly lack is good literary criticism. That stage of sophistication has not yet been reached, and there is little effort, outside the University, to make the taste of the reading public more discriminating.

Thus far I have concentrated on our writing in Burmese. It is the language of the country (though the different regional peoples have their own languages, too) and there is no longer any need for our authors to take up English unless they wish to reach an audience abroad. The future of our literature will lie with the writers who use Burmese.

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But some of our most talented writers were educated in English, and have written interesting books in English through which American readers can learn much about Burma and her culture.

The Rector of Rangoon University, Dr. Htin Aung, commands a first-rate English prose style. Oxford University Press has published his adaptations of *Burmese Folktales* and a definitive study, with sample translations, of *Burmese Drama*.

Among the most versatile of our authors is the poet, musicologist, and story writer U Khin Zaw, or "K," whose delightful autobiography, *Burma in My Lifetime*, half personal reminiscence, half informal history, has been serialized in *The Guardian*, an English-language magazine published in Rangoon which can be found in some American libraries. The editor of *The Guardian*, Dr. Maung Maung, is the author of *Burma in the Family of Nations*, published in English in Holland; he has also written a series of profiles of prominent living Burmese for his magazine, which is the vehicle for the best creative writing being done in English in Burma today. Among his contributors are two very gifted young men who write both stories and verse: U Mya Sein and U Win Pe. As our principal literary ambassador abroad, *The Guardian* is invaluable.

U Maung Maung Pye, a journalist, has produced a book of humorous essays and sketches, and another on the Burmese kings, both published locally in Rangoon. And one can learn a great deal about the Burmese people from the work of U Nu. He writes originally in Burmese, but his novel, *Man, the Wolf of Man*, ably translated by "K," was serialized in *The Guardian*, while his didactic play, *The People Win Through*, has been published (and produced) in America, as is the case with his highly personal account of *Burma Under the Japanese*.

Finally, there is the engaging and very informative *Burmese Family* of Daw Mi Mi Khaing. Published in India, it is an autobiographical sketch which gives a comprehensive account of the customs of the Burmese in modern times.

TAVOY EVENING

by U Win Pe

Where in the emerald evening the hills change color
From murky sea green to estuarine blue,
The thickets breathe scents of childhood, trees burst aflame
And buds are liquid spurts of soft fresh light.

The rutted road is old and ivy-wise with mysteries,
The patient boulder ponders on another day's close,
There is a sudden scamper of bats in the gables
And a shudder of wings in the mazy tamarind.

Across the stubble fields, bubbled through the palms,
The crow-pheasant's low call beats against the evening's throb,
I hear it in the tombs and sepulchers of my breast
Like moon-echoes through ancient temples at Pagan.

The lazy cattle come home beside the rising river,
On the tangled earth-banks the swelling pools gurgle,
The boatman stirs the swirling muddy water
While the suntide ebbs and the seatide flows.

On the lead pipe in the garden the drop has poised too long,
Too long has the equivocal haze lain on the hills.
Why are you like the haze and the droplet?
Our days leak through these emerald sieves too soon.

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BURMA'S SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY

Some Problems of Practical Politics

by U LAW YONE

1

THE new state of the Union of Burma which was established early in 1948 is professedly founded upon two basic concepts — socialism and democracy. The constitution provides for all the fundamental freedoms, and for a system of parliamentary government, based largely on the British pattern, with an elected legislature and the separation of legislative, executive, and judicial powers. The Government has taken a further step toward extending democratic procedures by setting up a Ministry for Democratization, whose task is to institute and operate a system of local government in which all those who rule, from the village level upward, shall be elected. This system is still experimental, and over the major portion of the country, centralized rule, that is through Government-nominated civil servants, continues side by side with parliamentary practice.

The growth of true democracy has undeniably been hampered by the strife-torn period which has existed without break from the very earliest days of our independence. When the insurrection was at its height, the Rangoon Government was unable to find men or arms to send to a hundred threatened towns and villages and was forced to find its friends wherever it could. More often than not these friends were simply thugs and desperadoes. But because they were prepared to fight the insurgents, the Government armed them and supported them. In those days of chaos, the country quickly reverted to a more primitive form of political organization than democracy — the rule of the strongman. In their petty domains, these strongmen became little kings, with power of life and death over the people. Soon, the people began to hate the tyrants, and once their usefulness was exhausted, even the Government became ashamed of them. Gradually, they were dispensed with, pensioned off, and disarmed. But there still remained the vacuum of power which could not be filled democratically by an unenlightened electorate, ill-used to the sensation of governing themselves.

This power vacuum is filled today by the AFPFL, the coalition party which has been dominant in Burma since independence and which, as its name of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League indicates, was originally a wartime popular front rallying all shades of nationalists against first the Japanese and then the British. With its vast ramifications, the AFPFL reaches out into almost every village in the country. No other political party has an organization even remotely approaching this colossus which lies like a net over the whole nation and maintains itself in power by patronage and sometimes even, in the last resort, by intimidation.

U LAW YONE, *a Sino-Burman and a Catholic, born in 1911, began his career with the Burma Railways. Later, as a British officer, he trained parachutists for OSS during the war, and, since 1948, has been Editor of* The Nation, *Rangoon's leading English-language newspaper. Ambassador* U THANT, *a Burman, born in 1909, is Burma's Representative at the United Nations. An educator and journalist, he had previously served for four years as Permanent Secretary to Prime Minister U Nu.* U TUN THIN, *a Burman, born in 1922 at Bhamo in Upper Burma, who took his M.A. at Michigan and Ph.D. at Harvard, is Professor of Economics at Rangoon University, now on leave in Washington as an Alternate Executive Director for Burma, Ceylon, Japan, and Thailand at the International Monetary Fund.* U MYAT KYAW, *a Burman, has been associated with several newspapers as reporter and editor. He is now on the staff of the United States Information Service in Rangoon and was the Burmese member of the editorial team which assembled this collection.*

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The AFPFL cannot be thought of as a political party like those in Britain or the United States. It is far, far more than that. It is the vehicle of the economic and cultural as well as the political life of the country. It affects the day-to-day living of the humblest rural cultivator in ways that he can see and understand. Land allocations, crop loans, *Pyidawtha* ("Happy Land") development projects, welfare benefits, purchase of the harvest — all are controlled by AFPFL adherents. This is patronage. Intimidation sometimes occurs too, in areas remote from courts and police. For though the big tyrants have gone, the small ones still wield enough power (they have the guns) to make opposition to them distinctly uncomfortable. Thus our political life, which we hope one day to make completely democratic, is in reality still a compromise between one-party rule, strong-arm tactics, and a fully documented system of courts, elected legislature, and individual freedom. The insurrection is largely to blame. But it must also be admitted that the AFPFL leaders have a "Messiah" complex by which they can justify deviations from democracy with the excuse that they must remain in power for the good of the country.

Having cut their political teeth on the works of Marx and Lenin, men such as Prime Minister U Nu and Deputy Prime Ministers U Ba Swe, U Kyaw Nyein, and Thakin Tin are also firmly wedded to the idea of mass organizations. They delight in huge rallies, at which crowds turn out waving banners and shouting slogans, even if it is only because they are given a free meal and a day's wages to do so. Our present system of political thinking depends more on the agitator, the propagandist, and the cell-organizer, than on the more flexible and free-thinking methods of the Western democracies. Thus the AFPFL has built such organizations as the Trade Union Congress of Burma (the labor wing of the party), the All-Burma Peasants Organization, and the All-Burma Women's Freedom League. These units, not arising spontaneously from the people, but planned and stimulated from above, have come straight out of the Marxist textbook which prescribes "mass" and "class" organizations. Yet it cannot be denied that the forms of democracy are maintained, and are sincerely acclaimed by the AFPFL leaders, who declare that they actively desire freedom of speech, a strong, free press, impeccable courts, and a democratic opposition.

If these leaders — and many of them are still comparatively young, having only recently finished college when they took up the fight for independence — are themselves somewhat confused about the kind of democracy they are shaping, how much more the people, to whom both Marxian socialism and Greek democracy are only names. Reared on a history of strongmen struggling for power, and a succession of dynasties, followed by the strong centralized rule of the British, they are but ill-prepared for the choices which democracy inevitably presents to the electorate. To see what these choices are — for the Burmese — let us take a closer look at some aspects of our recent history.

2

The late General Aung San, who successfully led our independence movement only to be assassinated by a political rival in 1947, will always be a hero to Burmans. He secured independence without firing a shot. He gained his point against the British by obstinacy and threat, which are not the hallmarks of diplomacy, but which sometimes achieve results where compromise would have been bound to fail. But General Aung San has made it extremely difficult for his successors to duplicate his feats. Flaming rebels can win independence for their country. It is what comes after independence that often proves to be their undoing.

The very fact that freedom came so easily was responsible for the momentum which the Communist movement gained when the party decided to go underground early in 1948. The Communists used with great effect the slogan that the new independence was only a sham — that the new leaders did not really intend to create a better social order for *all* the people — and large segments of the population swung behind them. Thanks in part to the steadfastness of the frontier people, whose primitive instincts told them no good could come out of murder and crime, the Union Government was able to take the brunt of the Communist onslaught. Since then, the AFPFL has gone to great lengths to make independence real to the people.

One of its first acts was to send the British civil servants and other foreign technicians packing. Not only the senior administrators, engineers, doctors, and experts in finance, agriculture, and forestry, who were mostly Europeans, but even many Anglo-Burman subordinates in the railroads, customs, and other services were replaced. The loss in efficiency is incalculable, and Burma now finds herself obliged to bring in new and expensive Western technicians for positions which the earlier incumbents could have handled at far less cost.

The nationalization of land, forests, inland water transport, and certain public utilities was rushed, in order to disprove the Communist charge that the independence which Burma had won was a fake. But some of the very elements which most loudly demanded nationalization proved to be its most implacable enemies. In nearly ten years of civil war, nationalized land has been seized, burned, or taxed as the local insurgent leader willed; nationalized timber "kidnaped and held for ransom"; and the nationalized steamer service incessantly pirated. The railroads have been sabotaged, and trains blown up, shot up, and robbed, again and again.

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Keeping up with the Communists, like keeping up with the Joneses, proved to be a tiresome business and every bit as expensive, so when it came to oil and minerals, the Government decided to draw the line. Despite intense Communist opposition, oil and mining operations were reconstituted as "joint ventures," partly owned by the former British companies, which provide top management, partly by the state. The Government had learned the lesson that while it cost nothing to inveigh against capitalism, doing things to frighten it away could be attended with serious aftereffects.

Doctrinaire socialism has thus had to give way to common sense. When in doubt, the AFPFL adopts trial-and-error methods. It does not learn its lessons as quickly as it should, but experience is a hard school which never fails to instruct. In an important speech last June, U Nu felt obliged to make a drastic reappraisal of his Government's policies. With characteristic frankness ("I am mainly responsible for our hasty actions"), he confessed that the AFPFL had "committed several blunders." The greatest of these was in "putting the cart before the ox" by starting on large-scale development and welfare programs before law and order had been fully restored. Other mistakes were in planning too ambitiously without a sufficiency of capital, trained personnel, and basic materials, and in taking too much of the economy under the wing of the Government.

How far U Nu can convince his AFPFL colleagues of the merit of such old-fashioned economic ideas remains to be seen. But there is no question that his foreign policy has the full backing of the Socialists, and even of the Communist-oriented segments of the opposition. This is because the policy of "active neutrality" has met with the approval of the world Communist bloc, and because Burma has entered into barter agreements not only with Russia and China, but also with European satellite countries.

The motives behind neutrality are noble or realistic according as one views neutralism as a moral force holding itself ready to join the hands of East and West the moment both should wish to extend them, or as a policy of fence-straddling, pure and simple. But barter, although it meets with the approbation of the Burmese Communists, was not designed for their especial delight. Partly because of the falling prices on the world market for rice and other commodities of which Burma has surplus to export, but also because the insurgents were making transport and storage difficult, the Government was forced into a trade policy which it may yet live to regret. The price and quality of the cement supplied to Burma were open scandals, and there have been other similar disappointments.

Today the tide of fortune is running against the Communists, and they are openly and unashamedly suing for peace. They had been hoping, of course,

BUILDING A NATION

by THE HONORABLE U THANT

Today a whole new nation is being built in Burma — politically, socially, and economically. Part of the task is physical: to repair war damage and create enough industrial capacity to improve living standards and make our country self-sustaining; an even greater part is social and psychological: to educate a people long held down by colonialism in the ways of democracy and self-development. Because there is very little private capital in Burma, the major responsibility has inevitably fallen upon the Government. Its greatest efforts are now being applied in such fields as these.

EDUCATION: *Free to all. Free text books for needy students. Many new schools being built in rural areas. Fivefold expansion of Rangoon University, and several branches. Mandalay College to be raised to university status. New technical and agricultural schools. State scholarships for advanced study abroad. Teacher training. Mass education program for adults. Burma Translation Society book projects.*

HEALTH: *Campaigns against malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, and venereal and epidemic diseases. Education for better nutrition and sanitation. New hospitals. Rural health centers. Maternity clinics. Training of public health workers and nurses.*

AGRICULTURE: *Redistribution of large holdings to the landless. Lowering of interest on crop loans. Twentyfold increase in total of crop loans since independence. Development of co-operatives. Improvement of farming methods. Diversification of agriculture. Experiments with new crops.*

DEMOCRATIZATION: *Voting compulsory. Elected village councils to replace old headman system. Decentralization of police and courts. System of democratization of local administration in operation in ten districts (one third of the country) as an experiment. Vocational training to rehabilitate insurgents. Nation-wide women's and youth organizations.*

LABOR: *A full range of legislation to protect the rights of workers and improve working conditions. Double rates for overtime beyond statutory 44 hours in factories. Encouragement of the trade union movement. Opening of labor welfare centers.*

COMMUNAL DEVELOPMENT: *Under the* Pyidawtha *("Happy Land") program, grants are made to communities, which are matched by voluntary contributions of labor or money, to build wells, irrigation systems, water storage tanks, disposal systems, roads, bridges, schools, libraries, and other social welfare buildings.*

In addition, there are projects for developing better urban housing and improving the transportation, electric power, and communications systems. Some of our major industrial projects are outlined in the discussion of Burma's economy on the next page.

These are ambitious goals and progress in some fields has been delayed by shortage of funds and unsettled conditions. But Government and people alike are determined that a new and better nation will arise in Burma in the shortest possible time.

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BURMA'S ECONOMY

by U TUN THIN

DUE TO wartime destruction and the insurrection, per capita output in Burma today is at a little less than 80 per cent of the 1938–39 level, although it is slowly rising. Industrial production plays a very minor role in the Burmese economy. In the colonial period, the British concentrated on developing the extractive industries — oil, mining, teakwood, etc. — and agricultural products, such as rice, which could be sold abroad. Profits from these operations were seldom reinvested in Burma. Manufactured goods were all imported; only a handful of local factories were set up. At present, agricultural production and the related sectors such as processing and marketing make up just below two-thirds of the total gross domestic output.

To put our economy in balance, we must carry out a moderate industrialization program immediately. Because there is so little accumulated private wealth in Burma, the State has a vital role to play in supplying and mobilizing investment funds and spearheading this modest industrialization. Certain essential utilities have been nationalized — railways, river transport, electric power — and also rice and timber export. In addition, the State has stimulated manufacturing by the erection of plants in cement, textiles, jute, steel-rolling, sugar, brick and tiles, and pharmaceuticals. Some of the old British enterprises, such as in oil and mining, have been revived as joint ventures, and have proved successful.

Together with this increase in the Government investment, private capital formation has also been on the increase and has nearly trebled in the period between 1948–49 and 1956–57. However, these developments were not made without great hardship. For the last four or five years, the foreign exchange part of the capital program (roughly $80 million a year for both the private and public sectors) has been financed out of extraordinary resources, i.e. with Japanese reparation receipts and foreign loans. Burma needs to have this level of investment sustained for about eight years more in order to be finally able, when the investments bear fruit, to finance all of her necessary foreign expenditures on her own.

On the domestic scene, Burma — as with so many other countries today — is obliged to practice deficit financing to find part of the money needed for growth. The moderate inflation she is experiencing can be traced to consumer pressure for imported goods — which must be limited because of her exchange position — rather than to any lack of confidence in the soundness of her currency.

To accomplish her goal, Burma needs a measure of financial assistance from abroad. Foreign investment in mining and industry is especially welcome. Technical assistance has been gratefully accepted and Burma has enlisted American consulting firms to help plan her development.

Burma is determined to devote to long-run development a large share of the meager resources presently available even if it necessitates some sacrifice of current consumption for later benefits.

that Red China or Russia would intervene to help them. But China's position at the Bandung Conference of 1954 and U Nu's warm reception in Moscow later that year made it clear that active interference in Burma was not part of the present Communist world strategy. Since then the party line has been to seek peace through negotiation.

Up to March 31, 1956, there was a general amnesty open to the Communists. To the last moment they seemed undecided whether to surrender or not, but the deadline passed with Thakin Than Tun, their leader, still in the jungle. It is reported that he is prepared to admit his error in staging the rebellion when he did but is not willing to "come into the democratic fold" without some such face-saving device as "peace talks" with the Government. Than Tun seems to have realized that the game is up, as far as the rebellion goes, but he is not finished as a politician. Exhaustion and malaria may drive him out of the jungle, but he will come to terms only if he can "trade bullets for ballots" — that is, if he is assured of a salubrious climate in which he can organize as the main opposition to the Government, with all the freedom that a recognized Communist party enjoys in working in a democracy. The AFPFL rejects this evolution and is pressing on with military action against the remaining insurgents. (The Communist party was outlawed by an act of parliament in 1954 — not because of its ideology, but because its members had used force against the Government. Since then, the "aboveground" Communists have functioned politically under other party headings.)

Another tribulation for the harassed AFPFL has been the process and problems of accommodating and integrating the minority races in the country — the regional peoples described in an earlier article in this collection. Under the British the "frontier areas" had been administered separately from Burma proper, and there was real doubt whether these frontier peoples would go along with the Burmans in demanding freedom, or would elect to remain with the British in some other form of association. It was only the personal appeal of General Aung San which persuaded the regional leaders to throw in their lot with the Burmans. He promised that their rights would be protected, and despite generations of latent mistrust — for the Burmans as the more developed race had long placed themselves on a higher level than their more primitive compatriots — they decided to trust him. The "Union" was formed and all seceded together from the British Commonwealth.

All went smoothly except for one of the minority races, the Karens, which also happened to be the largest. The Karens' trouble was that, unlike the other minorities, they had no well-defined homeland, but lived interspersed with the Burmans. Believing that they were as much entitled to "states' rights" as the other minorities, they de-

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manded a separate Karen State, and, when it was slow in coming, decided to lay down their lives for it. Early in 1949, the tension flared into conflict and raged over the country, opening grievous and tragic wounds which to this day have not been entirely healed. Though the leaders of this particular rebellion are for the most part out of the struggle, a Karen State has been granted, and only a few die-hards still continue to fight.

Also dissatisfied with their position today are the Arakanese, who inhabit Burma's western seaboard nearest to India. Cut off from the rest of the country by a high mountain range, the Arakanese have for generations developed a cultural identity of their own and although of Burmese origin, are actively demanding autonomy. The Government, fearful of fragmentation, is determined not to agree.

The AFPFL, hoping for a unitary state in the future, has made strong efforts to extend its own type of political organization and control into the minority areas. Thus far it has been most successful among the Kachins and the Chins. In the Shan State the transition from feudal rule to a democratic structure is not moving altogether smoothly. Two years ago, the sawbwas, responding to the prevailing feeling in the country, and warned by the Central Government that they were a target for Communist propaganda, agreed to relinquish their powers. But the details of the changeover are yet to be finalized. Owing to confusion of policy, the sawbwas are unhappy, and the Shan people — to whom the disappearance of their hereditary rulers is unimaginable — are bewildered.

Then there is another problem involving the frontier peoples: the threat of subversion from Red China, the neighbor who has, living in adjacent border areas, tribespeople similar in stock to those on the Burma side. Reliable information about Chinese activities is hard to come by, but it appears certain that the border Burmese are encouraged to trade and to seek medical and agricultural assistance across the line. There may also be some infiltration in remote areas where immigration checks are difficult. Thus, the importance of keeping the frontier peoples in close touch with Burma proper, and satisfied that they are getting their fair share of attention and of benefits in the shape of schools, hospitals, and modernization from the Central Government, cannot be underestimated.

Apart from the local Communists, above and below ground, the average person in Burma is but little concerned with the international relations of his country. Among the intelligentsia, however, there are two main groups: the Communists, vociferously attached to Russia and China; and those who are more quietly, but nevertheless fairly firmly, pro-West in sympathy, tastes, and inclinations. Yet one international problem recently became the focus of widespread attention because it touched a point of national pride.

INDIANS AND CHINESE IN BURMA

by U MYAT KYAW

The Indians, our neighbors to the west, have been trading and settling in Burma for centuries, attracted by the opportunities of our fertile, uncrowded country. The British used cheap Indian labor to exploit our agriculture, and nearly half a million Indians were imported in 1927, the peak year. Most of them went home during the war, and immigration has now been stopped, but there are still an estimated 700,000 Indian aliens in Burma, where their influence in the commercial sphere is very considerable. Thus, for example, such lines as hardware, textiles, provisions and gold trading are dominated by Indians, and they are employed in many other businesses. There are also a few Indian doctors, lawyers, and teachers, and some Indian banks still maintain branches, though the Indian absentee landlords have been expropriated.

There are only about 300,000 Chinese aliens in Burma but they too are strongly entrenched in profitable commercial activities. Theoretically, there are no restrictions on resident aliens — and there is, of course, complete freedom in religion and educating children — but, in practice, since 80 per cent of the licenses required for import-export trade are reserved for Burmese nationals, the Indians and Chinese must often take in a Burmese partner. Technically, an alien may qualify for Burmese citizenship if he had five years' continuous residence in Burma prior to World War II, and many Indians have applied, but frequently their applications are kept pending indefinitely. Because of exchange control regulations it is difficult for the Indians to send money home, another factor which discourages their remaining in Burma. There is no hostility, however, and a special Government ministry looks after the problems of foreigners in the country. What has been said of the Indians applies as well, of course, to the Pakistanis of our Muslim communities.

As the number of Indians in Burma decreases, that of the Chinese appears to be growing. Newspapers frequently report clandestine Chinese infiltration and settlement, particularly in northern Burma. Nationalization has deprived the Chinese of their lucrative position in the liquor trade and pawnbrokerage, but they are expanding commercially and entering new fields where their industry and acumen bring success. There are many Chinese restaurants.

Few of the Chinese are applying for naturalization, even though many of them are Burma-born and have never visited China. They have their own schools and temples, their own cultural activities. Recently, their loyalty has been turning from Chiang Kai-shek to Mao Tse-tung. This switch of allegiance can be traced to such factors as Burmese recognition of Peiping, frustrations over Chiang's inability to recover the mainland, Communist influence in Chinese schools and societies, the availability of business loans from the strong Chinese banks closely tied to Peiping, and, in general, an indifference to ideologies as long as the local Chinese can identify himself with a great and powerful country.

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Late in 1955, Red China sent troops across the frontier in a remote area adjoining Yünnan, inhabited by a primitive tribe called the Was. Clashes with Burmese troops led to a series of talks between the two governments. The Chinese amazed the Burmese by questioning the validity of the whole fifteen-hundred-mile frontier. They proposed a "package deal" whereby they would agree to the old line, and would withdraw from the Wa area, if Burma would cede another small strip around Hpimah in the Kachin State.

The Burmese were angry, but not for long. They soon saw that even if this was blackmail, it was worth while to buy off the blackmailer if in return for the area demanded he would henceforward hold his peace about the rest of the long and virtually indefensible frontier. Premier U Nu himself promised that if this deal was agreed to he would make no further concessions and would firmly protest the slightest violation of the new line. The Burmese approved, also asking for a small tract around Namwan, but as of this date, the Chinese have yet to sign, seal, and deliver the "package."

Most Burmese, perennially optimistic, do not today believe that Red China will invade. Theirs is not a temperament to cross bridges before they come to them. But Red China's action has increased the awareness of even the man in the street that his mighty neighbor can be tough, and may someday prove seriously menacing.

3

WHAT are the special roles of the AFPFL leaders who are shaping the destiny of Burma? Prime Minister U Nu, of the striking personality, is the best known. He has an easy charm and sincere friendliness which he has carried into the capitals of the world on his diplomatic tours. He likes to travel but finds time to keep an eye on all phases of government. A man who can be moved to compassion as well as to anger, he has matured with experience and with the practice of Buddhism, of which he is one of the most ardent supporters in Burma, devoting a part of each day to meditation and prayer. In politics, he has always been an independent.

U Ba Swe, U Kyaw Nyein, and Thakin Tin, all Socialists and each a Deputy Prime Minister, are U Nu's wheel horses in the Government. As Defense Minister, U Ba Swe seems to have made up his mind that it is a waste of time to parley with the Reds, but his war-to-the-knife policy would have been more successful if, as has been proved, Thakin Than Tun had not, at one point, known ahead of time every move planned against him. (A high-ranking army officer was recently retired following disclosures that his orders and the dispositions of his troops were known to the Communists.)

U Kyaw Nyein, as head of economic affairs, has had a hard time overcoming the shortcomings of the civil and technical services. A man with a keen mind and an alert intelligence, he still cannot locate enough assistants capable of discharging the banalities of administration. Rangoon has a new first-class airport, but built at the cost of two; a cotton spinning and weaving factory, with machinery bought from America, spindles from Japan, erected by Italian engineers — and so far running at a loss; a steel rerolling mill that bids fair to become a white elephant; a pharmaceutical works; a jute factory; while Japanese reparations are being used in part for a hydroelectric scheme. U Kyaw Nyein arranges loans, looks into currency and exchange, and does the thousand and one things that socialist planning demands. Burma may be mulcted, gypped, and squeezed, but some machines do arrive and are put to work, some buildings are going up, and rice is being sold or exchanged as fast as it is milled.

It is, however, in Thakin Tin's department that the future of Burma rests: how to get the average peasant and worker to put in the effort that is so necessary for survival as a nation. The Burmese have an old saying, "Contract debts; the king pays." The Government has been accused of making huge profits out of the rice monopoly, at the expense of the cultivator. But no amount of subsidy can get the peasant to change his way of life. The Burman is capable of sustained effort, but only for a little while. He is inordinately vain. He is imprudent to a fault. Millions have been written off in the way of loans which he cannot, or will not, repay. His love of adventure, no less of short cuts and change, is what leaves him open to the Communist blandishment. The insurgents may have hurt him economically, even physically, but past injustices are soon forgotten (already the Japanese have been forgiven their wartime brutalities) and are not the Communists in Burma Burmese?

In this devil-may-care attitude may be seen the greatest threat to the stability, and the sanity, of Burma. The Communists, whatever may be said in their disfavor, are not lacking in boldness, ingenuity, and devotion to their cause. The AFPFL is fond of proclaiming, "Let them come and fight us in elections. We're ready to take them on." With a more educated, less volatile people, Communism would not have the appeal that it apparently does in countries where nature is less bountiful. But with conditions as they are, and the people the way they are, is there something in the AFPFL's confidence that others can share?

U Nu's answer is: "Spread religion to the country's farthest confines; make Buddhism a living religion; keep ourselves uncorrupted and striving after the common good; despite our failings we will win." He may be right.

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BURMESE MUSIC

A Partnership in Melodic Patterns

by U KHIN ZAW

1

WHAT is Burmese music like? To ears accustomed only to Western music, ours may at first be a little disconcerting. It may seem more like a medley of spontaneous, unrelated sounds than a careful composition. And its rhythmic patterns may be hard to follow at first hearing. But I think that if you will listen to some of it a few times — and the *Burmese Folk and Traditional Music* record in the Ethnic Folkways Library offers a good sampling — you will discover that ours is actually a fully developed musical art. Historically, the traditions of Burmese music go back at least fifteen hundred years. For we know from a fascinating description in a Chinese chronicle of the year 802 A.D. that our musical instruments, and compositions for them, were already highly perfected at that time.

To begin with the fundamentals, let us first analyze our Burmese scale. It sounds as though it might have quarter tones and microtones, but actually it does not. It is the same as your European diatonic scale, but with this difference, that the fourth and seventh notes are both "neutral," so that the succession of notes is different. The makers of our early instruments did not provide for the accidentals in an octave. Yet our music does modulate from the tonic to the dominant — say, from C major to G major — and frequently from the tonic to the subdominant — C major to F major, and back again. But we have no F sharp or B flat. What we do is to put our F halfway between F natural and F sharp, and our B halfway between B flat and B natural.

Since we do not have the chromatic scale, our music may sound a bit flat to Westerners. Another basic point of difference is its essentially two-dimensional nature. The development of harmony has given Western music enormous depth. Because our instruments were not suitable for harmony, our music has instead developed a complexity of pure melodic patterns. You derive your musical satisfaction from marching in depth with chords. We have to get ours by going in the single file of notes, twisting and turning in graceful patterns. Even our drums play tunes. Thus our *putt waing*, a circle of tuned drums, is not merely for percussion, but plays a melody itself.

The rhythmic systems of Burmese music may have been determined by the nature of our language, which is not accentual but tonal. Rhythm in English depends largely on differences of emphasis on the syllables in the words and the words in the sentence. Burmese verse depends rather on the schematic arrangement of words with certain sounds recurring at fixed points. This means that timing and caesuras have great importance. In fact, in our singing the caesuras are even more important than the syllables or words in each measure. Often the singer keeps time with a pair of tiny bells and a small clapper in his hand.

The most usual time in our music is a simple duple or a simple quadruple beat. In the duple, the bells and the clapper go alternately. In the quadruple there is a rest on one or the other of the middle beats. No great importance is attached to

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BURMESE ENTERTAINMENT

by U MYO MIN

WE BURMESE *love amusement. We throng the movie theaters and will sit up till dawn watching an all-night* pwè. *Music and dance are part of our frequent festivals and family celebrations. But the truth is that the world of Burmese entertainment is now going through a period of rather chaotic transition. Our old theater traditions are being discarded or watered down — and what is taking their place has as yet no clear direction nor much artistic quality.*

Thus if you were to go tonight to a typical Burmese pwè *you would not see one of our classical dance-drama* zats *in the old Mandalay court style, but a variety program including dance numbers, skits, comic dialogue, singing, and perhaps a fragment from one of the old plays — all strung together, hour after hour, with lively musical accompaniment. The public loves it, but it is not great theatrical art.*

The word pwè *might be roughly translated as "show," and this gives the key to the nature of our theater today. The* zats *do have plots, but they are the familiar Buddhist tales or historical legends which we learned as children, so there is no element of novelty or surprise. What we come to see is the performing — the virtuosity of the actors.*

The dance numbers in our pwès *are usually drawn from two main style traditions: one which is pure dance, with little symbolical content (see Plate 22 in the art section) and another which mimes the dramatic stories of the* zats *(see Wun Tha's sketches on the following pages), a form which came to us from Siam.*

In recent decades there have been some attempts to create a modern legitimate stage with new plays treating contemporary themes but they have not succeeded. At the moment we have no repertory house in Rangoon with a regular season. What we do have are touring variety companies which, if no theater is available, set up little temporary stages for a night or two — the audience usually sits on the ground — and then move on to another place.

Foreign films, especially those from America and India, are extremely popular in Burma, but we also produce about fifty Burmese pictures each year. Unfortunately, none of the thirty-odd producing companies yet have the financial or technical resources to make impressive films. Scripts are often lifted bodily from foreign pictures, and clowning, song numbers, stunts, and overdoses of pathos mar the romantic or historical stories which are the standard fare. Newsreels and educational documentaries are being made by the Burma State Film Promotion Board.

To those of us who are proud of our heritage of classical drama and dance, and of highly evolved art forms such as the Burmese puppet plays, it is depressing to see so much neglect of the old traditions and adulteration by elements of the new which are of questionable value. But — we must face it — the psychological factors in our society which shaped our theater are rapidly changing, and until new bases are established our stage can hardly be expected to rise above the level of mere entertainment.

the variation. In one and the same piece the quadruple may sometimes change into the duple, or become faster or slower. But never must a musician get out of rhythmic time. So far as I am aware, compound time has never been used in our music.

Turning to the instruments which are now most in use, we must give pride of place to the graceful, boat-shaped harp, the thirteen-stringed *saung kauk* (see Plate 23 in art section). The Burmese orchestra is called a *saing*. Its ensemble includes the picturesque *putt waing*, with the player seated in his circle of drums, a circle of gongs (the *kyee waing*), the big *putt ma* drum, cymbals, clappers, and wind instruments such as the *hnè* (like an oboe) and the *palwé* (a bamboo pipe). The *saing* accompanies our stage performances (*zat pwès*), our ritual dances (*nat pwès*), and others of the many festal occasions that enliven Burmese life.

Even though Buddhist doctrine has sometimes frowned on music as appealing to the senses, we Burmese must be one of the most music-loving peoples in the world. Folk music is very much alive in our villages, where several interesting kinds of drums are especially popular.

The bucolic *dohpat* (which can be heard on Side II, Band 4 of the Folkways record) presides over village roisterings and goes along with itinerant singers. The pot-shaped *ozi*, boon companion of the bamboo flute, may be trusted to go off on such a spree of tune and rapid rhythm as to make one's limbs twitch to dance. The big *bongyi* (Side II, Band 3) is lord of the paddy fields, where its thundering rhythm eases the toil of those who are transplanting the rice. The *byaw* drum (Side I, Band 2) has its day in such home ceremonies as our almsgivings and *shinpyu* head-shavings.

Our classical music is far more elaborate than the instinctive rural drumming and singing, and scholars usually divide it into six main categories, most of which are represented on the Folkways record. But I must not risk tiring you with too many strange names and will say only that these classical compositions are usually songs, ranging in theme and tone from simple lyrics to courtly measures eulogizing the king or the royal city and solemn chants composed in adoration of Lord Buddha.

One of the most important events in the history of Burmese music — and all Burmese culture for that matter — was the second conquest of Siam by King Hsinbyushin in 1767. It is pleasant to think that although our wars with Siam were generally motivated by the Siamese king's white elephants, we brought back something which was by no means a white elephant to us! Craftsmen, entertainers, musicians, dancers numbering many hundreds were imported from Siam to Burma, and they brought about a vast augmentation of our culture. New life and new forms were infused into our theater, our classical dance style is far closer to that of Siam than, say, to that of India, and a principal type of

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our classical song, the *yodaya* (Side I, Band 3 and Side II, Band 8), takes its name from Ayuthia, the old capital of Thailand.

In the years following this Thai "invasion," there lived a remarkable man named U Sa, a veritable Leonardo da Vinci, who was poet, musician, playwright, soldier, diplomat, and statesman all combined. In a long lifetime, he was constantly creating and adapting new literary, dramatic, and musical forms, and over two hundred of our finest songs are attributed to him. Another important school of classical music comes down to us from the Mons; their beautiful songs were long ago enshrined in a collection called the *Mahagita*.

Finally, some of the purest and oldest forms of our traditional music are preserved in the propitiatory rituals of rural Nat worship. As Dr. Htin Aung explains in his essay, these spirits from the old animist cults have been welcomed into Buddhism, and the country folk still honor them with wayside shrines, or by hanging a coconut turbaned with a piece of red and white cloth from the king post of the house, to which offerings of fruit or cooked rice are made with music and dancing.

2

Now what has been happening to Burmese music since the radio and the cinema have vastly magnified the influence of Western music upon us? For my purist taste, far too much! But, to speak for the other side — and I fear they are numerous — let me bring in the views of my much admired and musically learned friend Ko Thant of Mandalay.

Ko Thant is scornful of our Burmese instruments because they lack the precision of the Western ones. But does he stop to consider that, in a sense, their very precision has made a slave of the instrumentalist? Our Burmese players attain extraordinary virtuosity with their crude instruments — making *them* the slaves — and achieve the most subtle shadings in moving from one note to the next. And because they do not read from a written score, but play entirely from memory, our musicians create the music anew at each playing, with full scope for the expression of personal art.

Ko Thant likes the strict discipline of the Western orchestra and condemns the free-for-all of the Burmese *saing*. He rails at Sein Beda for tuning a recalcitrant drum in the middle of a concert. He does not realize that this really does not matter, that Western music is a *compound*, whose object is harmonious coalescence, whereas ours is a *mixture*, the pleasure lying in the artful mixing of sounds. A European listens for the total effect of all, a Burmese for the individual effect of each voice in the orchestra.

In our music, accompaniment to singing does not mean a harmonic background to vocal melody, but a partnership in patterns. In and out of the framework of musical time and melodic direction provided by the instruments, the vocal part weaves another, related pattern and direction. So long as they keep to the framework, both singer and player may embellish and improvise. It is skill in weaving sounds, rather than voice production, which determines the quality of the singer.

Ko Thant maintains that music is an "international language" and that we should allow Western instruments and melodies to overwhelm us so that our musicians may speak the same musical tongue as the rest of the world. But does not this idea stem from a basic misconception of the nature of art? Is not the individual voice the really important thing? And will not the community of world culture be far richer and more stimulating if each regional culture seeks to develop its own traditions?

And since we already have improvisation in our music do we really need Western jazz and popular songs? But perhaps that question has already been answered: we have them. As long ago as 1940, Daw Than E wrote this little sketch on that subject:

> An old-fashioned Burmese gentleman was visited by a radio salesman. He settled down expectantly as the set was hooked up; perhaps he would hear the soothing strains of a song from the *Mahagita*. But what came out shocked him; he looked puzzled. "That's Johnny, the Burmese yodeller," explained the salesman, "the public adores Johnny; the new trend in Burmese music, you know. Oh, you'll hear wonderful things with this set. To give you an idea, there's Good Morning Tin Tin singing *Thama-wa-ya-ma* to the tune of *John Brown's Body* and *Eingyipa* to a rumba called *Mañana mañana*. They have *Bei mir bist du schoen* and *Isle of Capri* with Burmese words and even the old favorites like *Good King Wenceslas* — that's a duck of a tune — and *Come to the Savior, make no delay . . .*" At this point the old Burmese gentleman became unconscious.

Yes, we have been flooded with Hawaiian guitars, hillbilly banjos, and Harlem saxophones. Where will it end? As director of broadcasting in Burma I am trying to fight the menace. There are good modern pieces in the Burmese vein still being produced, and a number of popular songs based on our own folk tunes have become hits. And to preserve our old music — since little of it has been written down — we have been making tapes of the best classical pieces and folk songs.

For certainly our Burmese music *is* worth preserving, just as Gujarat painting, Khmer architecture, Chinese porcelain, and Mayan sculpture are worth preserving. The tragedy in those cases is that the art of the craftsmen has been lost. We cannot let that happen. We must not hope vainly for the evolution of a style that will be neither Burmese nor Western. Rather, we must go back to the purest traditions of our own music — relearn them, safeguard them, and present them to the world in a way the world can understand. For there is a strange beauty in the remote flowering of Burmese music.

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To a Burmese, dancing comes as naturally as laughter; it has its place in all his many festivities and ceremonies. Apart from rural folk types, Burmese formal dancing has two main traditions: one that is pure rhythmical movement, another that is dance drama, telling a story. Here Shweman Tin Maung, a leading performer today, strikes a familiar pose in classical style.

Here we see Kenneth Po Sein, another star, with his partner, Win Win, in the traditional "Lovers' Journey" duet, which is often danced as a prologue to the *zatpwè* dramas. The movement is stylized and symmetrical, yet fluid and lyrical in feeling.

Here we see a royal hunter dancing with his bow. Many of the dances in a *yeinpwè* recital, in which solos alternate with group numbers, date back to the courts of the Burmese kings, and the ornate costumes and headdresses are from that period. A *saing* orchestra provides lively musical accompaniment, and often the dancers sing songs that relate to the theme of the dance.

Drawings by U Wun Tha
Text by Daw Nwe Nwe

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The strongest foreign influences on Burmese dance have come from India and Siam. It has no language of gestures, but the plots of many *zats* are based on stories from the *Ramayana* epic of India. Others are drawn from Burmese history or from *Jataka* stories of the earlier lives of the Buddha. A *zatpwè* often lasts all night.

In the scene above, the ogre Ponnaka is playing dice against the king's minister Widura. At right, he performs a demonic solo dance. *Zats* such as this are danced in the *yodaya* style, brought to Burma in the eighteenth century by Thai dancers taken prisoner in the wars with Siam. In recent years, Shweman Tin Maung and others have been choreographing ballets in more modern style.

The old Burmese puppet theater has contributed a number of dances to the repertory, among them this *zawgyi* solo, in which the magician, a hermit of the forest, dances with his magical staff, leaping high to show how he can fly in the air. Fighting dances between two ogres are also popular.

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A CHRONOLOGY OF BURMESE HISTORY

563–483 B.C.: Life of Gotama, the Buddha, in India.

c.300 A.D.: Indian traders bring Hindu religion and culture to Lower Burma, which is inhabited by Mons and Pyus, both peoples of Mongolian race who had migrated south from China, displacing earlier peoples who may have been Indonesians. According to tradition, Buddhism reached Burma by land at a much earlier date.

800–1000: The Burmans move south from eastern Tibet through China into the Irrawaddy plains.

832: Nanchao tribes sack Prome. End of Pyu power. The Mons repulse the Nanchao and develop a strong civilization around Pegu and Thaton.

849: Foundation of Pagan.

1057: King Anawrahta of Pagan conquers Thaton and brings Theravada Buddhism to Upper Burma.

1084–1112: Kyanzittha rules and builds at Pagan.

1287: Tartars sack Pagan. Disruption of kingdom. In next two hundred years the Shans become increasingly powerful throughout the area, founding Siam in 1350.

1365–1857: Burmese capital established at Ava in 1365. Five hundred years of power struggle among rulers of different regions. Shan migrations into the plains. Occasional interventions by Chinese. Repeated Burmese invasions of neighboring Siam, Arakan, Manipur, and Assam by strong dynasties.

c.1415: Maniratanapum, Burmese book of traditions.

1498: Vasco da Gama finds sea route to India.

1519: Portuguese trading post at Martaban.

1531–1752: Chieftans of Toungoo rise to dynastic power; their greatest warrior king, Bayinnaung (1551–81), dominates Burma and invades Siam.

1627: Dutch and English East India Companies open branches in Burma.

1752–60: Reign of Alaungpaya, great conqueror, who establishes dynasty that rules Central Burma till 1885.

1767: King Hsinbyushin invades Siam. Captives bring Thai culture to Burma.

1784–85: Burmese conquest of Arakan. King Bodawpaya's census records a population of 1,831,467 Burmans.

1813: Judson founds American Baptist Mission.

1819: Burmese conquests of Manipur and Assam, and friction in Arakan, lead to first Anglo-Burmese War. Arakan and Tenasserim ceded to Britain.

1852: British conquer Prome and take over Lower Burma.

1853–78: Reign of enlightened King Mindon at Mandalay. He sponsors Fifth Buddhist Synod in 1871. His minister, Kinwun Mingyi, visits Europe in 1872. Factories and trading ventures. Suez Canal opens market for Burmese rice in 1869. British build Rangoon-Prome railway in 1877.

1885: Britain annexes Upper Burma. King Thibaw exiled. Burma administered as part of India.

1923: Partial self-government of "dyarchy" system; majority of British Governor's Legislative Council elected on democratic franchise.

1936: Rangoon University students' strike.

1937: Administration of Burma separated from India.

1941: U Nu and Thakin Party leaders jailed.

1942: Japanese invade Burma, driving out British, Chinese and some Americans under Stilwell. Dr. Ba Maw heads Government. Aung San and U Nu simulate cooperation while secretly organizing resistance. Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League founded.

1945: British invade Burma from India. Burmese help them drive out Japanese. British Governor returns; AFPFL leaders on his Executive Council in 1946.

1947: Aung San meets Attlee in London, wins approval for Constituent Assembly to draft constitution. Aung San assassinated. U Nu negotiates independence.

1948: Burma independent on January 4. U Nu heads Government. Communists begin rebellion. Land Nationalization Act passed by Parliament.

1949–54: Karens revolt in 1949. Army fights Kuomintang Chinese, Communists, and Karens.

1952: Pyidawtha Conference: Welfare State program.

1954: First meeting of Colombo Powers. Sixth Great Buddhist Council held in Rangoon. U Nu and Chou En-lai exchange state visits.

1955: U Nu attends Bandung Asian-African Conference.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The editors wish to thank all those whose kind advice and assistance made possible the preparation of material for this collection, notably the Rangoon Steering Committee of Dr. Htin Aung, U Thein Han, Dr. Maung Maung, U Myo Min, and Hon. U Thant; and Mr. and Mrs. Edwin G. Arnold, Carl G. Burness, Keith DeFolo, Mr. and Mrs. John C. Eddison, Dr. John Everton, Miss Mavis Galstin, Cecil Hobbs, Michael Holmden, William Lippert, Dr. Jane G. Mahler, Kenneth W. Morgan, John Musgrave, N. Paul Neilson, U Kyaw Ohn, Jack Ringer, Sao Saimong, D. P. Shori, U Ba Soe, Dr. Seth Spaulding, Dr. Tun Thin, Ben A. Thirkield, U Maung Maung Tin, Miss Daphne Whittam, Robert S. Wickham, U San Win, Miss Dorothy Woodman, Dr. Leon E. Wright, U Wun and U Khin Zaw. Acknowledgment is made to the following publishers for reprint permission: *Dagon* for "The Prince of the Prison"; *The Guardian* for "The 13-Carat Diamond" and a number of poems; *The Journal of the Burma Research Society* for "Some Burmese Riddle Verses"; The Ronald Press for parts of "The Meaning of Buddhism" from *The Path of the Buddha.* Credit is given to the following photographers for the plates noted: Edwin G. Arnold, 14; E. E. K. Hibbard, *Atlantic* cover; J. A. Lavaud, 7; Dr. Charles Henry Mahler, 1, 2, 3, 4; U Kyaw Min, 16; Kenneth L. Neff, 15; U Maung Maung Tin, 9, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36; and to the Burma Archaeological Department for plates 5, 8, 10, 26 and the plans of the Ananda Temple.

ADDITIONAL BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for National Economy U KYAW NYEIN is a Burman, born at Pyinmana in 1915. As a Rangoon University undergraduate, he was active in the students' strike of 1936. He was an organizer of the Burma Revolutionary Party, served in Dr. Ba Maw's Government under the Japanese, and helped negotiate independence in London in 1947. He is one of the leaders of Burma's Socialist Party.

U WIN PE, a Burman, was born in Rangoon in 1928. After graduation from Rangoon University, he joined the Burma Civil Service and became a District Officer. He is now on leave from his post as Assistant Secretary, Ministry of National Planning, for a year at Harvard.

Answers to Riddle Verses

a: A coconut. *b:* A woodpecker. *c:* A Burmese harp. *d:* A needle. *e:* A weighing scale. *f:* The Butea flower. *g:* A turtle. *h:* A weaver's shuttle. *i:* The rain after the hot season. *j:* The moon and its light. *k:* A bee.

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A GLOSSARY OF BURMESE WORDS

(*Editor's Note:* There is no accepted uniform system of rendering the sounds of Burmese words phonetically in English. Therefore the preferences of individual writers have been followed in this collection.)

arahat: in Buddhism, one who has completed the discipline required to attain liberation.

Bodhi: in Buddhism, the state of enlightenment.

Bogyoke: honorific for military hero; generalissimo.

Brahma: in Buddhism, a personal god.

chinthe: Burmese legendary and symbolical lion.

Deva: in Buddhism, a divine being or angel.

Dhamma: in Buddhism, the universal laws which govern human existence; the truth taught by the Buddha.

gaungbaung: formal male headdress: a silk kerchief tied on a conical straw frame.

htamein: type of *longyi* worn by women.

hti: spire of a Burmese pagoda.

Jatakas: stories of the earlier lives of the Buddha.

kamma: in Buddhism, the principle of causality in moral experience.

Kassapa: one of the Buddhas who preceded Gotama.

kyat: Burmese currency; at present, about 21 U.S. cents.

lakh: one hundred thousand: 100 *lakhs* equal 1 *crore.*

longyi: lower garment of Burmese dress for both sexes; it is wrapped around like a skirt or sarong.

mahadevi: wife of a *sawbwa,* a Shan chief.

Mara: in Buddhism, the spirit of evil; the tempter.

metta: in Buddhism, the concept of universal love.

Nagas: hill tribes of northwest Burma and Assam.

nahtwin: ear-piercing ceremony for girls.

Nats: nature spirits, and spirits of dead heroes.

Nirvana (Nibbana): in Buddhism, the state when the mind becomes free of passion, hatred and delusion.

padaythabin: a legendary magical tree; now a tree decorated with alms gifts.

parabaik: type of early Burmese book with fan-like folds.

pasoe: type of *longyi* worn by men.

phongyi: Buddhist monk, a member of the Sangha.

pwè: variety show; entertainment with music; dance.

pya: Burmese currency; 100 *pyas* equal 1 *kyat.*

Pyidawtha: "Happy Land"; slogan expression for the social and economic welfare program of the new Burma.

saing: Burmese orchestra, with circle of tuned drums.

Samsara: in Buddhism, the round of rebirth.

Sangha: the order of Buddhist monks.

sawbwa: hereditary feudal chief in the Shan State.

sayadaw (sayagi): honorific for a monk or teacher.

shiko: to bow down, kneeling and touching forehead to the ground, in respect to an elder or superior.

shinpyu: head-shaving ceremony for initiation of Burmese boys as monks.

sikhara: pyramidal tower of an Indian-style temple.

Tantrism: esoteric rites, yogic practices, and doctrines found in both Buddhism and Hinduism.

Thakin: master; also, a member of the Thakin party which led prewar resistance against the British.

Theravada: one of the major divisions of Buddhism, also known as Hinayana, "the lesser vehicle." It is dominant in Ceylon, Burma and Thailand. The other major sect is Mahayana, "the greater vehicle."

Tripitaka: the "Three Baskets" of the Buddhist scriptures.

yein: classical "pure dance" group recital or style.

yodaya: style of dance or song imported from Siam.

zat: classical Burmese dance drama.

zawgyi: magician, or alchemist.

zayat: side building of a pagoda for rest or meditation.

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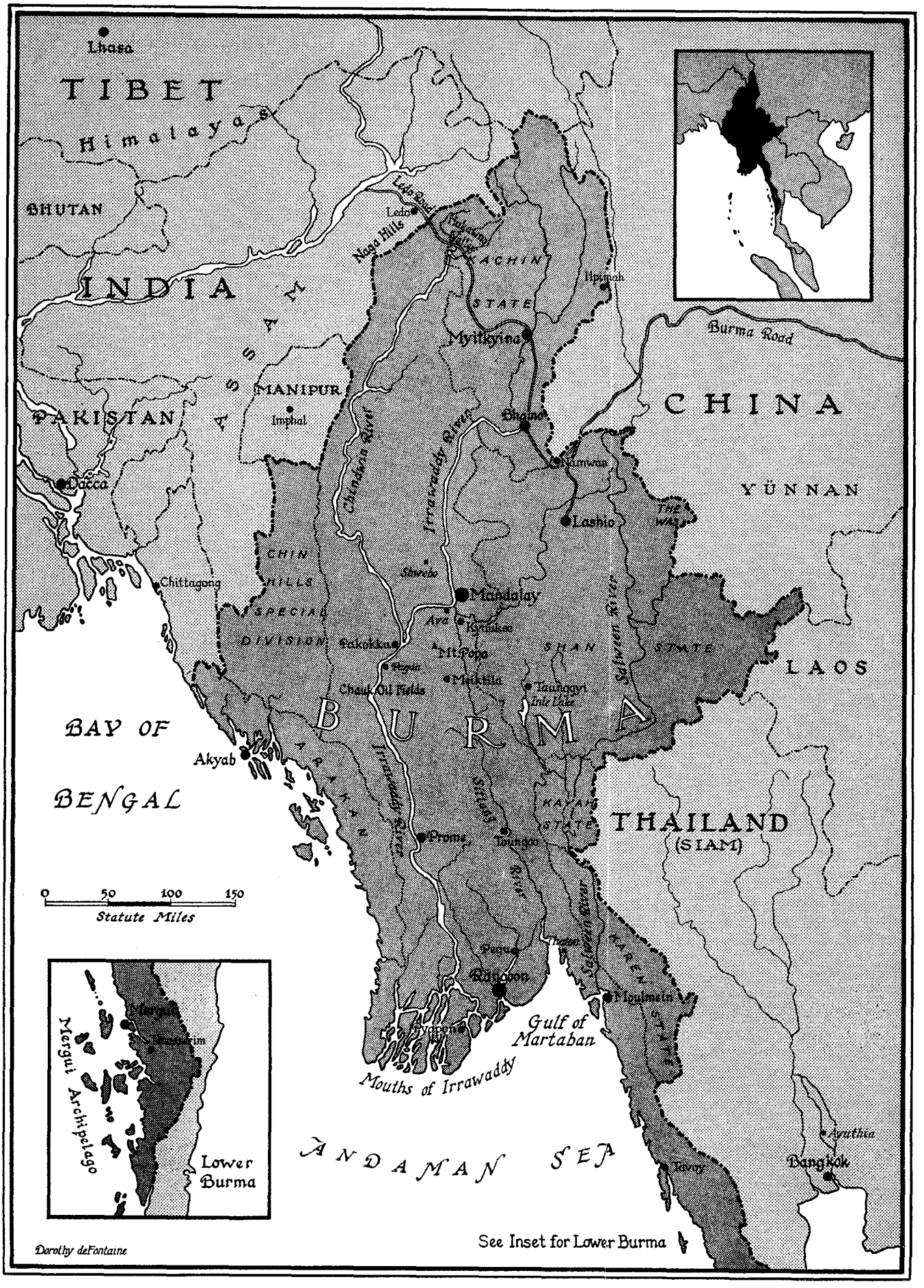

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